# mamotte shugogetten

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minene sakurano

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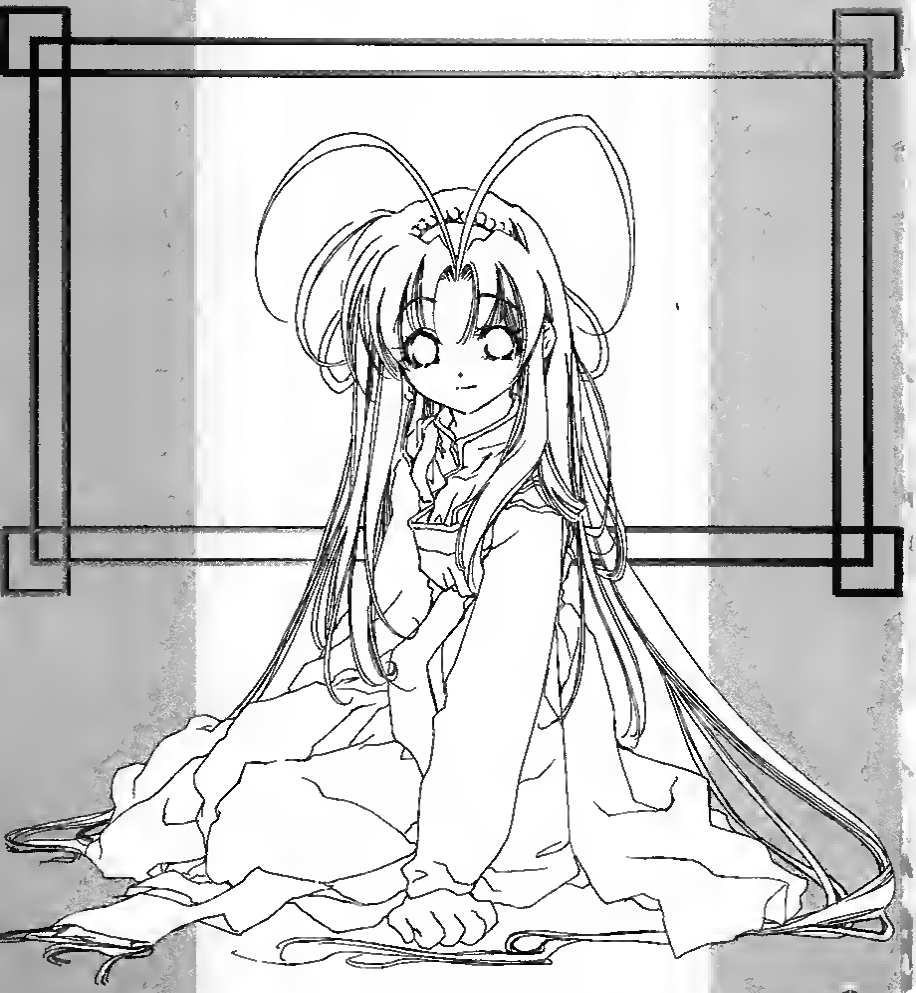

Minene Sakurano

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# mamotte shugogetten™

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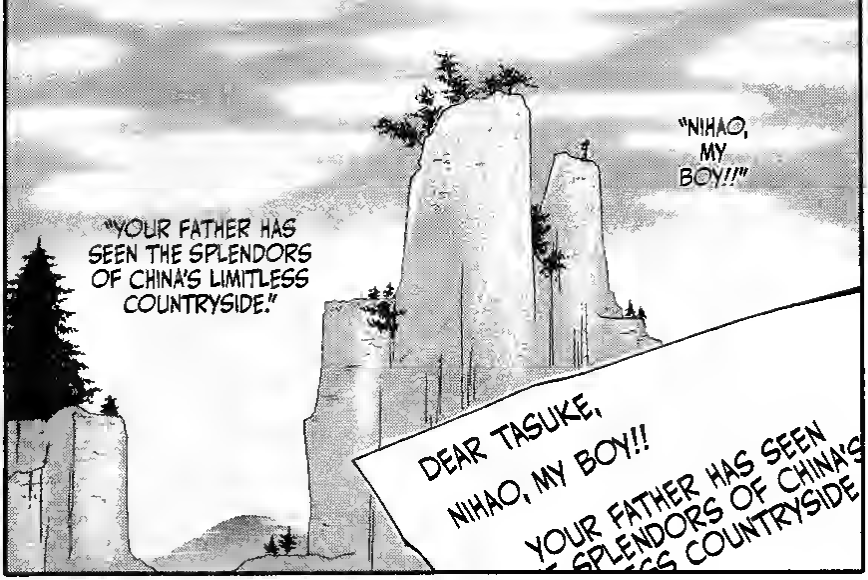
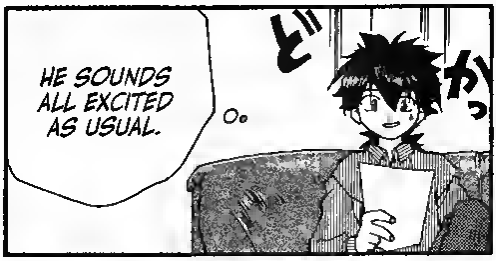
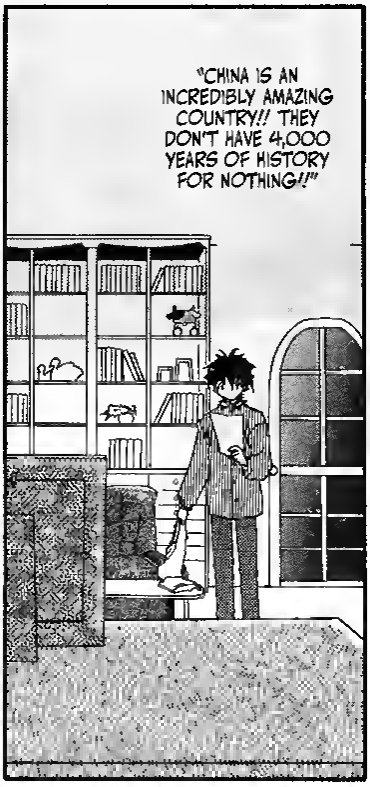
...THEY TELL THE LEGEND OF A MYSTERIOUS RING CALLED THE SHITENRIN.
IN A DISTANT REGION OF CHINA, SECRETED AWAY ACROSS MANY MOUNTAINS...
WHOEVER PEERS WITH A PURE HEART INTO THE SHITENRIN WILL CALL FORTH A SHUGOGETTEN, GUARDIAN SPIRIT OF THE MOON.
THE LEGEND OF THE SHITENRIN WAS PASSED DOWN THROUGH MANY GENERATIONS, THOUGH FEW ARE LEFT WHO REMEMBER.

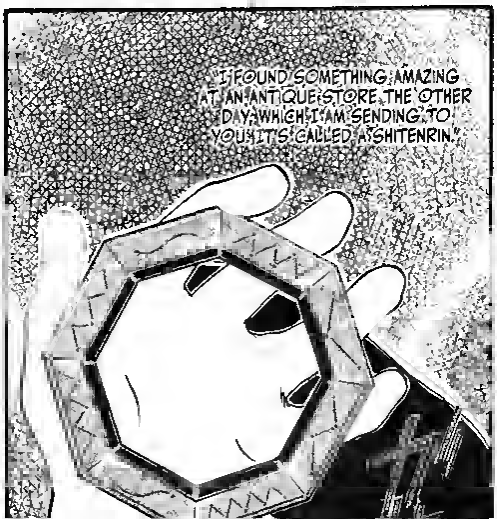
# CHAPTER 1
# SHUGOGETTEN, INVITED

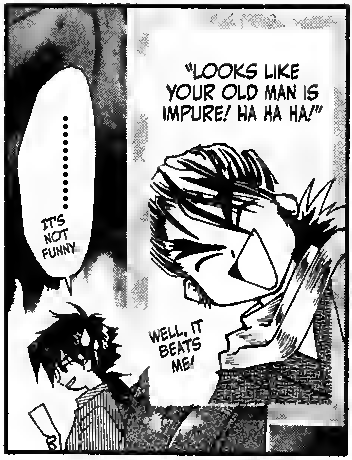
NOW, MANY YEARS SINCE PEOPLE SPOKE OF THE LEGEND...
WHO SENT ME A PACKAGE?
SHICHIRI
...THE SHITENRIN HAS FALLEN INTO THE HANDS OF THIS LONELY BOY.
IT'S FROM DAD.
.....
SHICHIRI
THIS IS TASUKE SHICHIRI. HE HAS BEEN LIVING ON HIS OWN AND TAKING CARE OF HIMSELF SINCE HE WAS LITTLE.

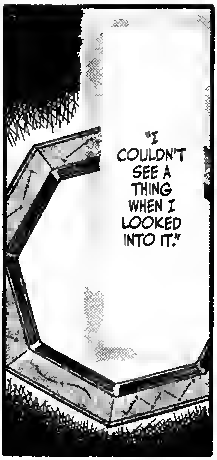

"NIHAO, MY BOY!!"
"YOUR FATHER HAS SEEN THE SPLENDORS OF CHINA'S LIMITLESS COUNTRYSIDE."
DEAR TASUKE,
NIHAO, MY BOY!!
YOUR FATHER HAS SEEN


HE SOUNDS ALL EXCITED AS USUAL.
O。

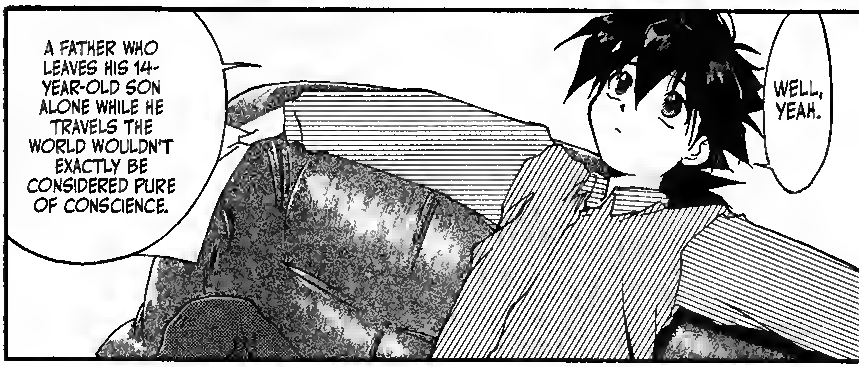

"CHINA IS AN INCREDIBLY AMAZING COUNTRY!! THEY DON'T HAVE 4,000 YEARS OF HISTORY FOR NOTHING!!"

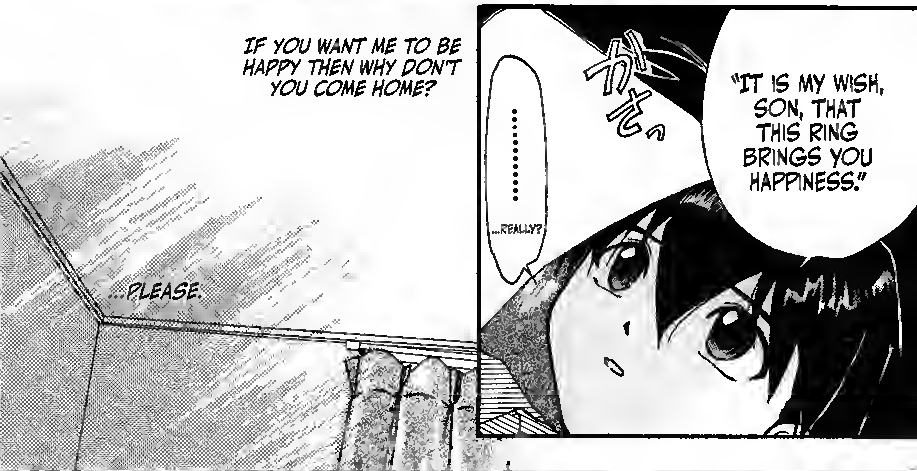

I FOUND SOMETHING AMAZING AT AN ANTIQUE STORE THE OTHER DAY, WHICH I AM SENDING TO YOU. IT'S CALLED A "SHITENRIN."


"LOOKS LIKE YOUR OLD MAN IS IMPURE! HA HA HA!"
WELL, IT BEATS ME!
.....
IT'S NOT FUNNY.


"I COULDN'T SEE A THING WHEN I LOOKED INTO IT."

"THE SALESMAN TOLD ME THAT IF SOMEONE PURE OF HEART LOOKS INTO THE RING AND SEES A LIGHT INSIDE, HE WILL BE GRANTED THE PROTECTION OF HEAVEN."
HERE WE GO AGAIN..


A FATHER WHO LEAVES HIS 14-YEAR-OLD SON ALONE WHILE HE TRAVELS THE WORLD WOULDN'T EXACTLY BE CONSIDERED PURE OF CONSCIENCE.
WELL, YEAH.


IF YOU WANT ME TO BE HAPPY THEN WHY DON'T YOU COME HOME?
...PLEASE.
.....
...REALLY?
カた
"IT IS MY WISH, SON, THAT THIS RING BRINGS YOU HAPPINESS."

SIGH...
THERE'S NOTHING TO SEE. IT'S PITCH BLACK.
SO HE DUG THIS UP IN CHINA...
LET'S SEE HERE.
PITCH BLACK?
WAIT A MINUTE!
SHOULDN'T I BE ABLE TO SEE THROUGH A RING?
WHOA!!
SOMETHING'S SHINING.
HOLY COW!!
IT'S COMING TOWARD ME!
WHAT THE--?!

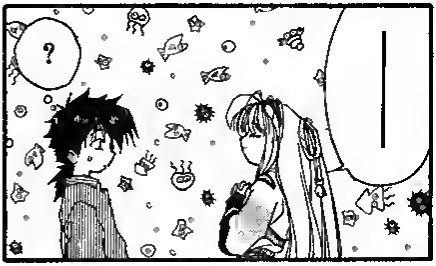
I AM VERY HAPPY TO MEET YOU, MASTER ...
...UH.
OW.

Y-YES.
ぽっ
I-I'M AL... I'M...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MASTER?
I AM THE SHUGO-GETTEN, SHAORIN.
IT IS NICE TO MEET YOU.
YES.
ちょこっ
SH-SHUGO-GETTEN?

WHAT IS MASTER'S NAME?
T-TASUKE... UM... SHICHIRI...
BUT...

"ONE WHO IS LOYAL TO HER MASTER, WHO PROTECTS AND WATCHES OVER HIM LIKE THE MOON IN THE HEAVENS."
THAT IS WHAT IT MEANS.
MY NAME IS SHAORIN. PLEASE CALL ME SHAO.

THAT IS A WONDERFUL NAME!
...UH.
S-SURE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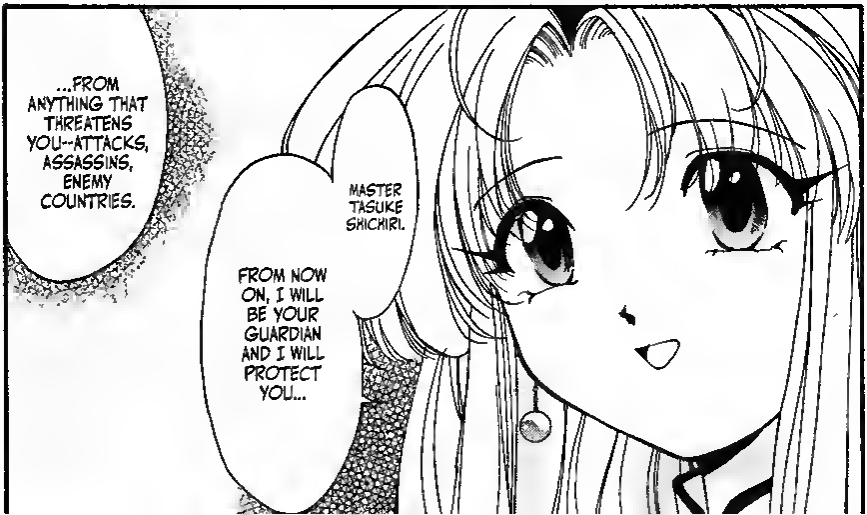
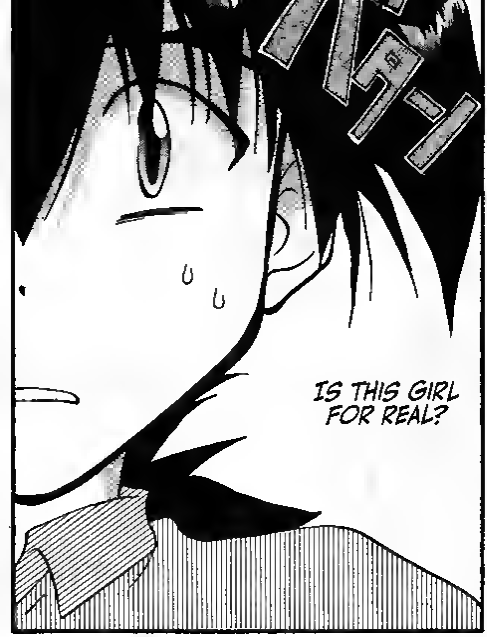
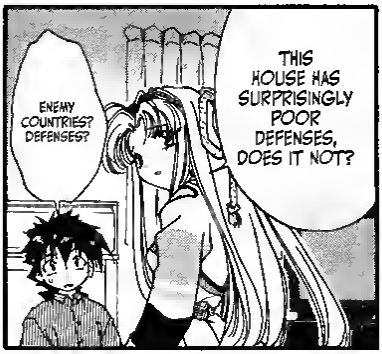
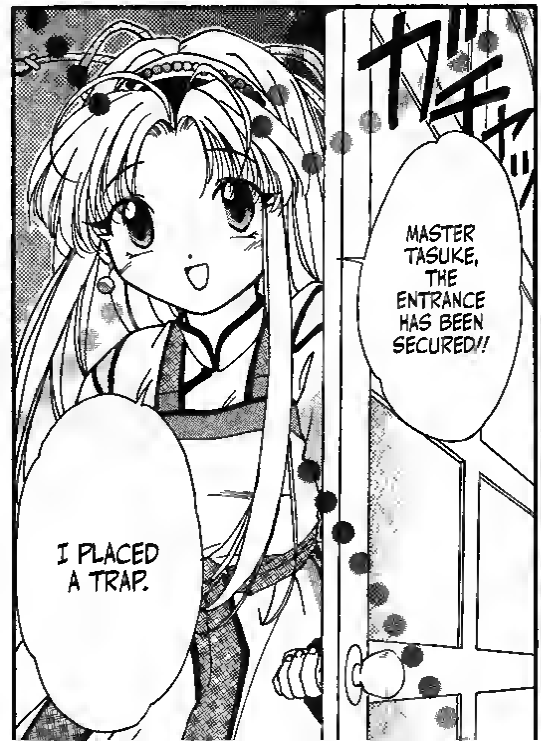

...FROM ANYTHING THAT THREATENS YOU--ATTACKS, ASSASSINS, ENEMY COUNTRIES.
MASTER TASUKE SHICHIRI.
FROM NOW ON, I WILL BE YOUR GUARDIAN AND I WILL PROTECT YOU...


IS THIS GIRL FOR REAL?


ENEMY COUNTRIES? DEFENSES?
THIS HOUSE HAS SURPRISINGLY POOR DEFENSES, DOES IT NOT?

.....
IS THIS THE WAY TO THE ENTRANCE?


ガチャ
MASTER TASUKE, THE ENTRANCE HAS BEEN SECURED!!
I PLACED A TRAP.

YOU LOOKED INTO THE RING AND THIS STRANGE LADY CAME OUT OF IT.
WAIT, TASUKE. CALM DOWN AND THINK.

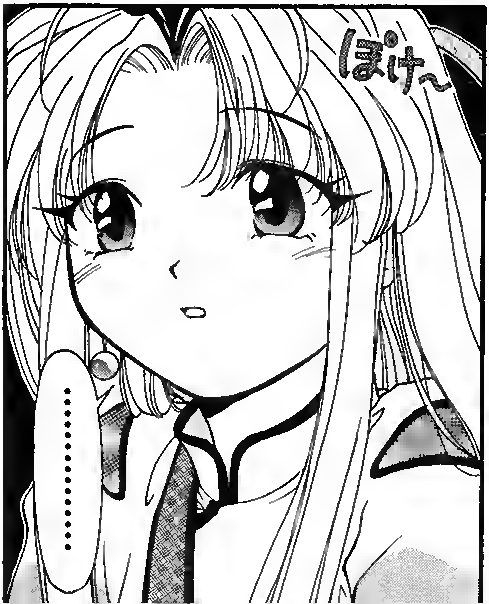
THEN, SHE STARTED TALKING ABOUT PROTECTING ME. SO...
MAYBE WHAT DAD SAID IS TRUE!
NO WAY

WE'VE CAUGHT AN INTRUDER ALREADY!!
BOOM!
BOOM!
ピンポーン
DING DONG
A...
...TRAP?
THOSE ARE THE SHAKI.* THEY ARE THE GODS OF A CHINESE CONSTELLATION THAT I SUMMONED FROM THE SHITENRIN.
AHEM.
UH... THAT'S...?
!!
I ORDERED THEM NOT TO LET ANYONE INTO THIS HOUSE BESIDES ITS RESIDENTS.
I'LL JUST LEAVE THE NEIGHBORHOOD BULLETIN OUT HERE, OKAY?
.....
NOW YOU ARE PROTECTED FROM ANY ENEMY, NO MATTER HOW FIERCE!!
TURN IT OFF!!
WHAT DID YOU DO?!
ガバッ

* SHAKI A PART OF THE CONSTELLATION LUPUS (WOLF)

MASTER TASUKE, WHAT IS THIS?
SIGH...

OH BROTHER...
HOW AM I GOING TO EXPLAIN THIS TO THE NEIGHBORS?
THAT OLD GOSSIP IS GOING TO TELL EVERYONE.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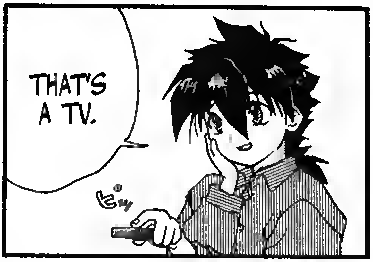
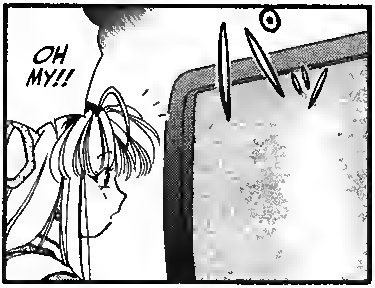

THAT'S A TV.


OH MY!!

OH! AND PEOPLE TOO!
LOOK, THERE IS A DOG INSIDE.
I HOPE THEY ARE NOT CRAMPED INSIDE THAT SMALL BOX TOGETHER.
SANDY'S OUT PLAYING IN THE YARD.
.....
HEY, STEVE, WHERE'S THAT DOG?
HA HA. ISN'T THAT...

...JUST PERFECT.
MASTER TASUKE!! HE IS A BAD MAN!!
LANCE, QUIT JOKING AROUND...
GOOD LUCK, STEVE!
HE HAS A TENSHA!*
*A TENSHA IS LIKE A MUSKET.
MASTER TASUKE, YOU MUST ESCAPE!!
IF HE SHOOTS THE TENSHA IN THAT SMALL BOX, YOU WILL BE IN DANGER TOO!
HEY, UH
LOOK OUT, MASTER TASUKE!!
HELP! SANDY!!
OW?!

どさっ
どさっ
A!
...YES.
HMM...
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

SANDY!!
THANKS, SANDY!
WE MUST GIVE HER A REWARD!
SANDY DEFEATED THE BAD MAN FOR US!
MASTER TASUKE!
MAY I GIVE HER TREATS?
SURE, BUT...
I DON'T THINK YOU CAN GIVE THEM TO HER.
SHE'S KIND OF CRAZY, BUT...
...SHE SEEMS PRETTY NICE.
TH-THAT'S...
THAT'S STRANGE. WHERE DID SANDY GO?

WHAT A GIFT...DAD'S SENT ME THIS...TIME.
JEEZ...
ガチャ
I GUESS SHE IS PRETTY CUTE...
HERE, SANDY. HERE IS YOUR REWARD.
I'LL JUST GIVE IT TO MASTER TASUKE.
NO... REALLY? MAYBE
HERE'S YOUR REWARD...
IT IS DANGEROUS FOR YOU TO BATHE ALONE.
OH, MASTER TASUKE...
ボコ
ボコ
ボコ
ザバーン

WHAT?!
WH-WHAT?!
BOOM
SHE'S VERY BOLD!!
I KNOW SHE IS!!
SH-SHE'S NAKED!!
DUN-DUN-DUN
NUH-UH!!
LET ME WASH YOUR BACK, MASTER TASUKE
IF I GET OUT NOW...

I WILL STAY BY YOUR SIDE TO PROTECT YOU.
WHEN YOU BATHE, YOU ARE DEFENSELESS AGAINST ENEMY ASSASSINS!
ｲﾞｰ ｲﾞｰ ｲﾞｰ
MASTER TASUKE?
.....
MASTER TASUKE, WHAT IS WRONG? HAS THE ENEMY GOTTEN TO YOU ALREADY?!
N-NO! I DON'T WANT TO GET OUT!!
I'M JUST A KID!
はなせ

NOT HELPING
ギブアーップ
NGH...
MASTER TASUKE, GET AHOLD OF YOURSELF!
HERE WE GO!
IF THIS KEEPS UP...
::I'M NOT GOING TO LAST VERY LONG.
OWWW...
SHE SEEMS TO HAVE HER MIND SET ON PROTECTING ME FROM "THE ENEMY."
OH.
OOMPH.
BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY ENEMIES.
I FEEL KIND OF BAD, BUT THERE'S NOTHING I CAN REALLY DO.
UM, YOU KNOW...

THIS ISN'T THE DANGEROUS PLACE YOU THINK IT IS.
NO ONE WANTS TO TAKE MY LIFE.
EVEN IF SOMETHING HAPPENED, I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF.
THAT'S WHY... UH...
OH... I SEE.
.....

THEN, I AM ONLY MAKING TROUBLE FOR MASTER TASUKE, AREN'T I?
NO... THAT'S NOT WHAT I... ...MEANT.
I UNDER-STAND.
PLEASE FORGIVE ME FOR BEING SO IMPETUOUS.
I WILL RETURN TO THE SHITENRIN.
MAYBE I WILL MEET ANOTHER PERSON WITH A PURE HEART SOMEDAY.

.....
ゴゥ
カラン
THINKING ABOUT IT WILL ONLY REMIND ME OF HOW LONELY I AM.
IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN NICE TO EAT DINNER TOGETHER AT LEAST.
...I GUESS I'LL LEAVE IT AT THAT.
THERE SURE ARE SOME CRAZY THINGS IN THIS WORLD.
すん

SIGH
.....
HE DOES APPEAR TO BE FREE FROM DANGER.
.....
BUT...

I WONDER IF HE WOULD MIND IF I CAME OUT AGAIN.
SIGH
...HE LOOKS LONELY.
"EVEN IF SOMETHING HAPPENED, I CAN TAKE CARE OF MYSELF."
BUT AFTER ALL, I...

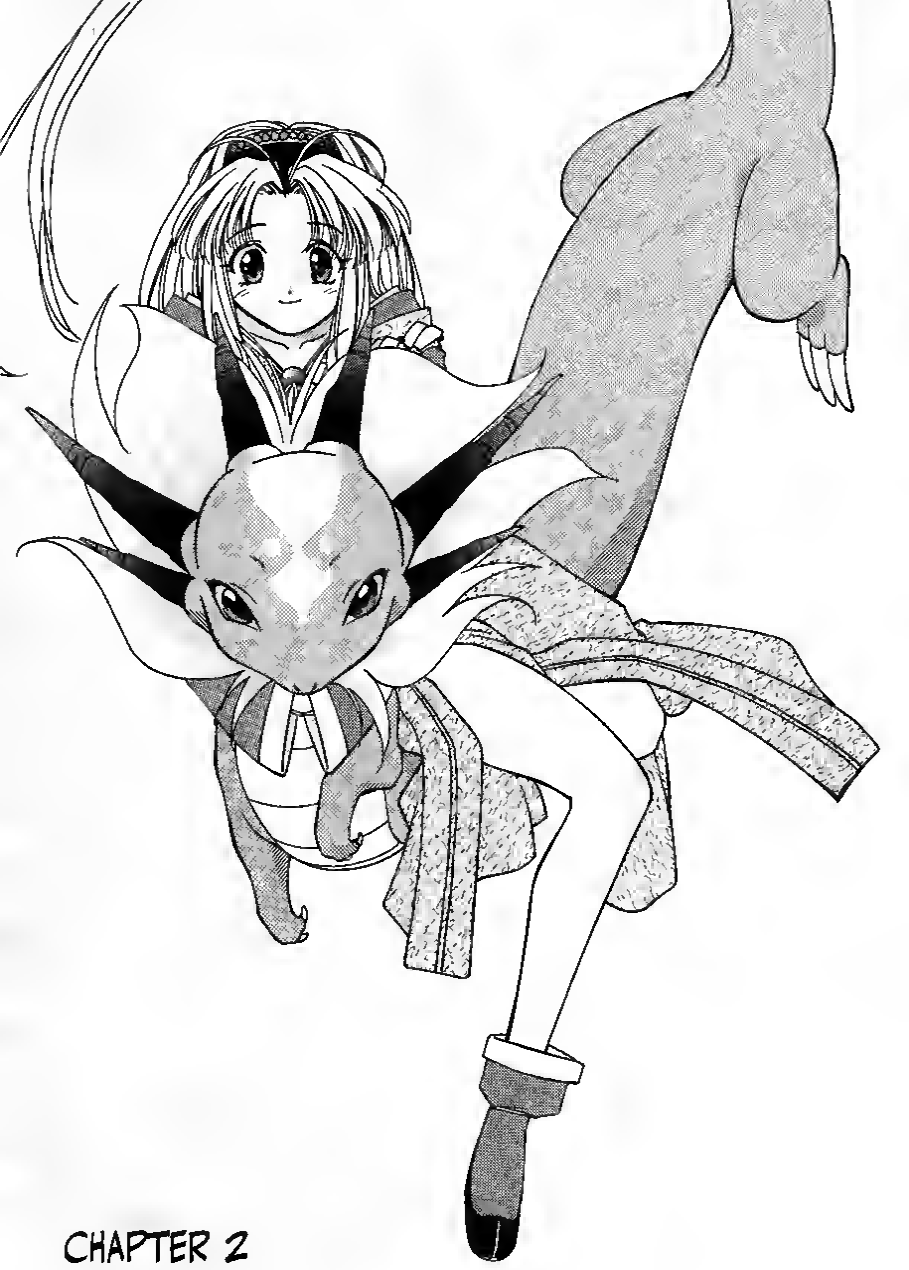
MASTER TASUKE.
HUH...?

I WOULD LIKE TO PROTECT YOU.
...FROM THE ISOLATION AND LONELINESS IN YOUR SOUL.
IF IT'S NOT TOO MUCH TROUBLE...
WOULD THAT...
...BE OKAY?

I HAVE NEVER HAD TO PROTECT ANYONE FROM LONELINESS, SO...
...I MAY NOT BE OF MUCH HELP, BUT I WILL TRY MY BEST.
I...
I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT KIND OF PLACE THIS IS...
...AND I AM AFRAID THAT I WILL ONLY CAUSE YOU MORE TROUBLE, MASTER TASUKE.

"PRO-TECT"...
YOU DON'T HAVE TO "PROTECT" ME FROM LONELINESS.
IF YOU WERE WITH ME...
...I THINK THE LONELINESS WOULD PROBABLY JUST DISAPPEAR.
LET'S BE FRIENDS, SHAO.
.....
YES.

OKAY, SHE'S DEFINITELY CUTE.
SHHO. YOU'RE TOO CLOSE.
WELL, DAD, IT LOOKS LIKE YOUR PRESENT MIGHT MAKE ME HAPPY AFTER ALL.
IT'S TRUE THEY DON'T HAVE 4,000 YEARS OF HISTORY FOR NOTHING!! HAHAHAHA
OH!
SANDY HASN'T COME BACK YET, HAS SHE?
OR MR. STEVE EITHER
HER INNOCENCE IS CONTAGIOUS...
WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED?
OH, HEH, NO...



# CHAPTER 2
# TOGETHER FOREVER

MORN-ING!
OH, MASTER TASUKE. ♡
GOOD MORNING!
...WOW.
SHAO, IS THIS...?
IT'S BREAK-FAST!!
WELL, I FIGURED THAT, BUT...
I CAN'T EAT THIS MUCH IN THE MORNING.
?

I'VE GOT TO GO!
OH NO! I'M GOING TO BE LATE!!
MASTER TASUKE?
SHAO, YOU WATCH OVER THE HOUSE, OKAY?!
HE'S GONE...

MASTER TASUKE!
HUH?
...KE!
GOOD, NO ONE ELSE IS WALKING YET!
NOT FROM MY SCHOOL AT LEAST.
SHAO!!
WHAT IS THAT?
I'M SO GLAD I CAUGHT UP WITH YOU.
OH, THIS LITTLE ONE IS CALLED KENEN. HE FLIES ME ACROSS THE SKIES.
... NEVER MIND
HOSHIGAMI (STAR GOD): KENEN
A STAR GOD THAT SHAO CAN SUMMON TO CARRY HER ON IT'S BACK.

I AM A SHUGO-GETTEN.
I TOLD YOU TO WATCH THE HOUSE!
WHAT IS, "WATCH THE HOUSE"?
...IT IS MY DUTY TO ALWAYS STAY BY YOUR SIDE AND PROTECT YOU.
LIKE THE MOON IN THE HEAVENS...

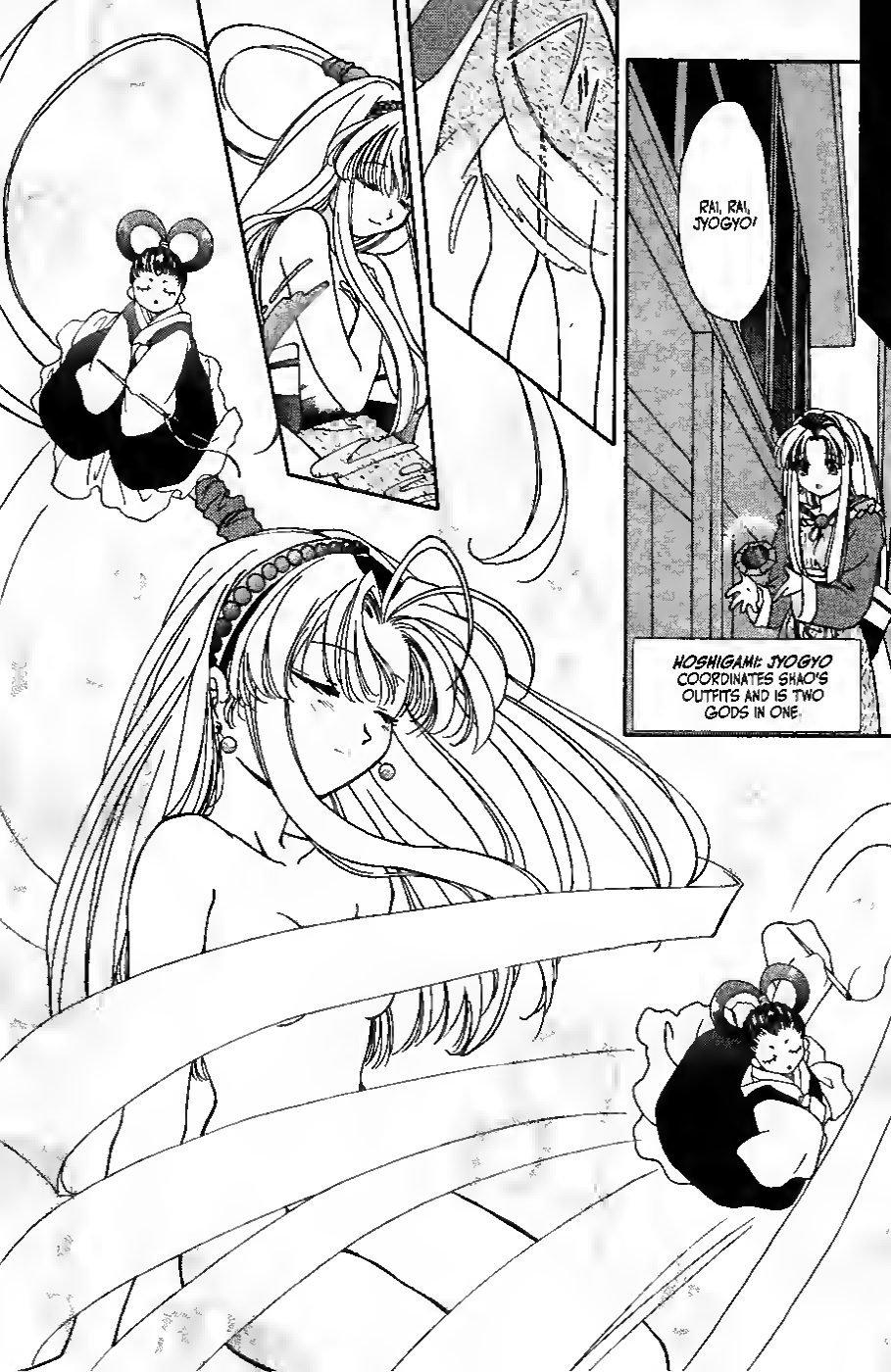
はひゅーん
PLEASE! JUST GO HOME AND TRY NOT TO ATTRACT ANY ATTENTION!!
BUT...
WE CAN TALK ABOUT THAT LATER.
I WISH YOU'D STOP GETTING IN MY FACE...
MEE MEE
MASTER TASUKE SAID TO GO HOME.
BUT IT WOULD BE AWFUL IF...
...SOMETHING HAPPENED TO HIM AND I WAS NOT THERE TO PROTECT HIM.

HMMM...
MASTER TASUKE.
I WONDER WHERE HE IS.
.....
FIRST, WE WILL DISCUSS HOW TO USE THE SCALPEL.
TODAY WE WILL BE DISSECTING FROGS.

?
SH-SHAO!!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
WAIT!!
YOU MUSTN'T!!
I DON'T KNOW WHAT CRIME THIS FROG HAS COMMITTED, BUT...
...IF YOU WERE THIS FROG...
...WOULD YOU WANT YOUR BODY SLICED OPEN?

WH-WHAT SHOULD I DO? SHE'S TALKING NONSENSE...
HE PROBABLY HAD TO DO SOME COWARDLY OR BAD DEED JUST TO SURVIVE.
JUST LOOK AT HOW SMALL HE IS!
PLEASE ...
...THAT IS WHY...
...YOU MUST FORGIVE HIM.
WHAT IS SHE DOING?
たったった。
THERE, YOU ARE FREE NOW.
FEELING GUILTY
M-MAYBE I WILL FORGIVE HIM.
TEACHER...
.....

YOU MUST NOT DO BAD THINGS ANYMORE, OKAY?
FROG.
BAD THINGS?
BUT...
...MASTER TASUKE SAID NOT TO ATTRACT ATTENTION.
IS IT SOME KIND OF TRAINING FACILITY?
I SUPPOSE I MUST INVESTIGATE.
...BUT WHAT KIND OF INSTITUTION IS THIS?
THE FROG HAS BEEN FREED...
OH?
JUST 10 MORE LAPS!!


RAI, RAI, JYOGYO!
HOSHIGAMI: JYOGYO COORDINATES SHAO'S OUTFITS AND IS TWO GODS IN ONE.

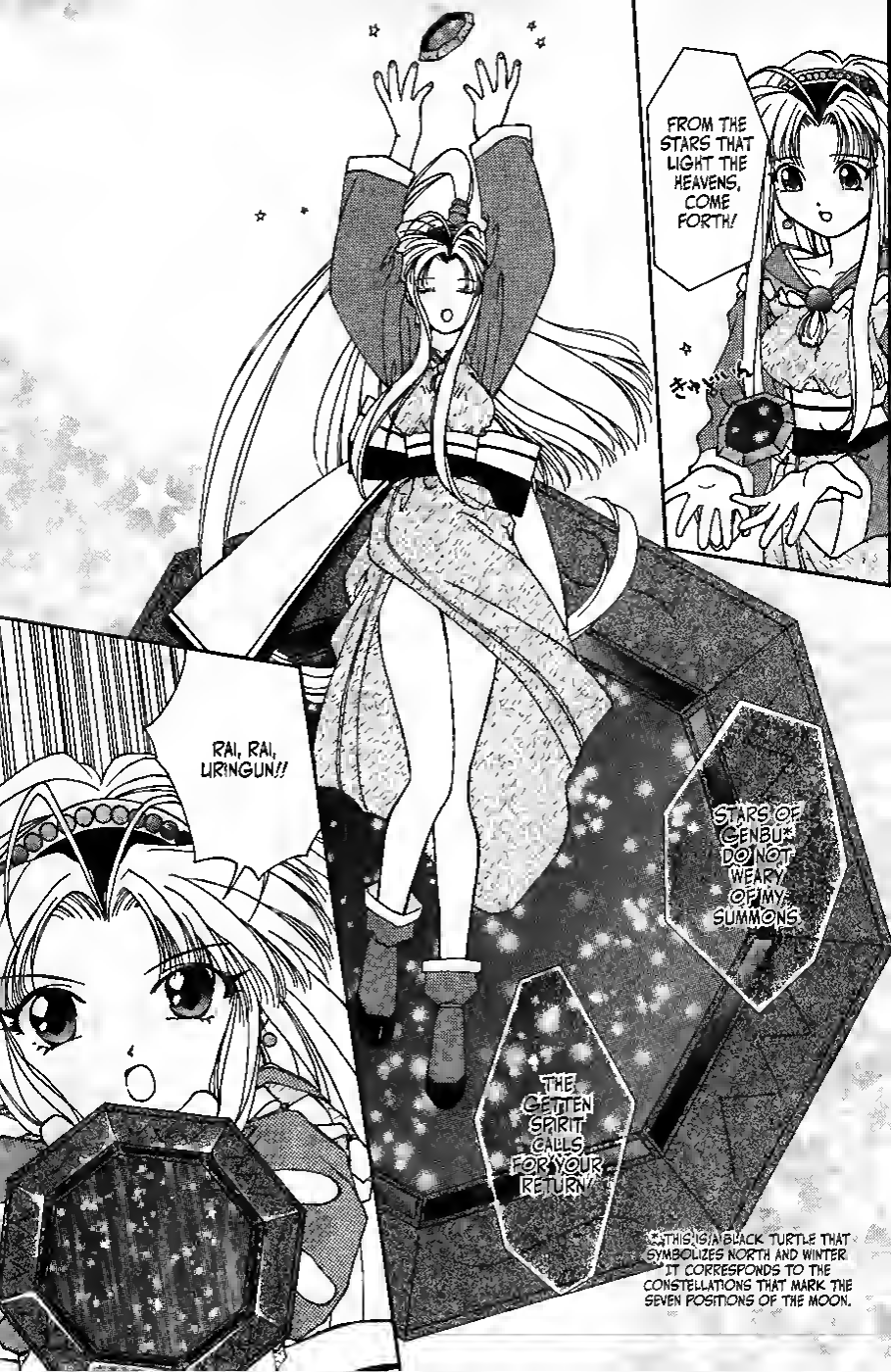
I WILL NOT ATTRACT ANY ATTENTION DRESSED LIKE THIS.
HOW I LOOK LIKE EVERYONE ELSE
YOU THERE! WHY ARE YOU STANDING AROUND?! RUN!!
ピッピー
UM.
OKAY.
YOU SEEM TO BE VERY FATIGUED.
HUH?
NO DUH I'M TIRED. DON'T YOU THINK THAT TEACHER IS TOO STRICT?
WE'RE GIRLS, YOU KNOW?!
AS I SUSPECTED! THEY ARE FORCED TO TRAIN AGAINST THEIR WILLS!!
YOU'LL BITE YOUR TONGUE OFF IF YOU KEEP TALKING WHILE YOU RUN!
ピッピッピー

PLEASE DO YOUR BEST.
HUH...?
IS IT DIFFI-CULT?
IT'S SO HARD I WANT TO DIE.
THEY APPEAR TO BE TRAINING FOR MANY DIFFERENT THINGS.
HEY, LET ME BORROW YOUR GLUE
AND THAT GIRL SAID IT IS SO HARD SHE WANTS TO DIE.
MAYBE THE FROG WAS TRYING TO RUN AWAY BECAUSE THE TRAINING WAS TOO HARD FOR HIM, AND THAT IS WHY HE WAS PUNISHED.
MAYBE...THIS IS...

...A PLACE WHERE THEY MERCILESSLY TORTURE PEOPLE WHO TRY TO ESCAPE!
A FORCED TRAINING CAMP!!
UGH!!
THAT SOUNDS LIKE...
MASTER TASUKE.
THEY'VE SEEN THAT WEIRD GIRL FROM EARLIER ALL OVER THE SCHOOL.
TASUKE, DID YOU HEAR?!
SHAO--
I WISH SHE'D COME TO OUR CLASS AGAIN!!
SHE WAS CUTE

WHAT'RE YOU DOING DOWN THERE?!
SH...!!
AO.
MASTER TASUKE, I HAVE PREPARED AN ESCAPE ROUTE.
FOLLOW ME THROUGH THIS TUNNEL.
UM, YOU KNOW, I CAN'T LEAVE EVEN IF I COULD SNEAK OUT.
BUT WHY NOT?
AND DON'T DIG HOLES AND STUFF...

WHAT IS KEEPING HIM HERE?
MASTER TASUKE SAYS HE CANNOT LEAVE.
DOING PUSHUPS HERE..?
OH, I THOUGHT I'D DO SOME PUSHUPS, SEE?
ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR!
WHAT?!
WHAT'S UP, TASUKE?
THAT WOULD EXPLAIN WHY HE CAME HERE TO UNDERGO THIS STRICT TRAINING!
THAT MUST BE IT.
MAYBE THEY ARE BLACKMAILING HIM!
WHAT A HORRIBLE PLACE!!
THINK, SHAO...HOW TO RESCUE MASTER TASUKE?


FROM THE STARS THAT LIGHT THE HEAVENS, COME FORTH!
RAI, RAI, URINGUN!!
STARS OF GENBU* DO NOT WEARY OF MY SUMMONS.
THE GETTEN SPIRIT CALLS FOR YOUR RETURN!

*THIS IS A BLACK TURTLE THAT SYMBOLIZES NORTH AND WINTER. IT CORRESPONDS TO THE CONSTELLATIONS THAT MARK THE SEVEN POSITIONS OF THE MOON.

URINGUN, TEAR DOWN THIS BUILDING!!
HOSHIGAMI: URINGUN
GODS OF THE CONSTELLATION PISCIS AUSTRINUS, THE FISH
IN ALL, THERE ARE 45 URINGUN ENTRUSTED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION AND DISMANTLING OF BUILDINGS.1
AAAH!! WHAT THE--?!
...OH.
WH-WHAT IS GOING ON HERE?!
URINGUN! YOU MUST NOT HURT ANYONE!!

WHOA!!
.....
IT'S...IT'S PROBABLY A HALLUCINATION...
AAAH!!
I WONDER IF SHAO WENT HOME...
...QUIETLY.
<THAT'S... IT COULDN'T BE...
...HM?

FACULTY
YAY! IT CAME OFF!!
カタ
M-MAKE THEM STOP! PLEASE!
THIS IS UNHEARD OF!
YES!!
HEY, WAIT! COME BACK HERE!!
HEY YOUUU!!
たったった
YES?

NOOO!
WAIT--!!
"URINGUN! YOU MUST NOT HURT ANYONE!!"
...MASTER TASUKE.
はぁ
はぁ
はぁ。

O... KAY!!
I'VE GOT YOU NOW!
TEACHER... A TRASHCAN...?
MASTER TASUKE...

SHAO!!
AH!
IT WAS YOU... AFTER ALL.
THERE WERE THESE LITTLE GREMLINS DISMANTLING THE CLASSROOM, AND I THOUGHT... WAIT...
GET OVER HERE!!
TEACHER...?

.....
WHAT DID YOU DO?!!
FIX IT! PUT IT RIGHT! LADY GETTEN'S ORDERS!
I CAN STILL SEE THEM.
MAYBE WE'VE LET TOO MUCH STRESS BUILD UP.
I'M SORRY.
YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND ANYTHING ABOUT THE WORLD NOW, SO JUST DON'T DO...ANYTHING!!
REALLY

MAYBE I SAID TOO MUCH...
ぽ
ごしごし
MAYBE IT'S MY FAULT FOR NOT TELLING HER ABOUT SCHOOL.
HEY! STOP THAT.
"I HAVE NO IDEA WHAT KIND OF PLACE THIS IS AND I AM AFRAID THAT I WILL ONLY CAUSE YOU MORE TROUBLE, MASTER TASUKE."

"IF IT IS NOT TOO MUCH TROUBLE I WOULD LIKE TO PROTECT YOU FROM THE ISOLATION AND LONELINESS IN YOUR SOUL."
SORRY, CAN YOU TAKE CARE OF THE REST?!
SHAO..
HE'S ACTING STRANGE TODAY...
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
I CANNOT BRING MYSELF TO RETURN TO THE HOUSE.
I WONDER IF...
...MASTER TASUKE IS STILL MAD.
AH!
SHAO!!
THERE YOU ARE!

.....
MASTER TASUKE ...
.....
I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT SCHOOL.
LET'S GO HOME.
...YOU'RE STILL HERE.
I'M GLAD ...
I'M SORRY FOR GETTING ANGRY WITHOUT EXPLAINING ANYTHING TO YOU.

I WANT TO LEARN MORE ABOUT YOUR WORLD...
...SO THAT I MAY SOONER BEGIN...
...TO PROTECT YOU.
I AM A SHUGO-GETTEN.
LIM.
MASTER TASUKE
OH...
ろぁっ
YEAH?
AND...

ドキン
I AM GLAD YOU FORGIVE ME.

MASTER TASUKE. ♡
IT'S DINNER TIME!!
Uh~h
UGH.
THERE'S ENOUGH HERE TO FEED AN ARMY!
...AND I DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH MORE FOOD I CAN EAT.
THERE'S SO MUCH MORE TO TEACH HER...
PLEASE EAT A LOT, OKAY? ♡
IT HELPS MAKE YOU STRONG

# CHAPTER 3
# WHAT IS SHOPPING?

MASTER TASUKE.
I AM SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING
BREAKFAST TODAY IS...
CHAN SHAN CHAO MI FUEN, PII PAA TOFU AND INYAA CHAO TAN PAI.
♬
SURE...
THE USUAL FEAST.
KAKIDO NEWSPAPER
LOCALS VICTIMIZED BY MYSTERIOUS FOOD THEFTS
THE SHARK FIN I PUT IN SIMPLY VANISHED!
.....
NO...WAY...
♫
HEY, SHAO... HOW DID YOU GET THE INGREDIENTS FOR ALL THIS?
OH, WELL, I...

WHAAAAAT?!
...SIGH.
?
THEN THE THIEF IN THE NEWSPAPER WAS YOU!
YOU...YOU SAY HE "GATHERS" IT...?
HOSHIGAMI HACHIKOKU
GOD OF THE CONSTELLATION ARRIAGA, THE CHARIOTEER SHREWDLY IDENTIFIES AND GATHERS HIGH QUALITY FOODS.
...FOR ME TO TEACH YOU ABOUT SHOPPING.
IT'S SUNDAY, SO IT'S THE PERFECT TIME...
SHAO...
IEEEE

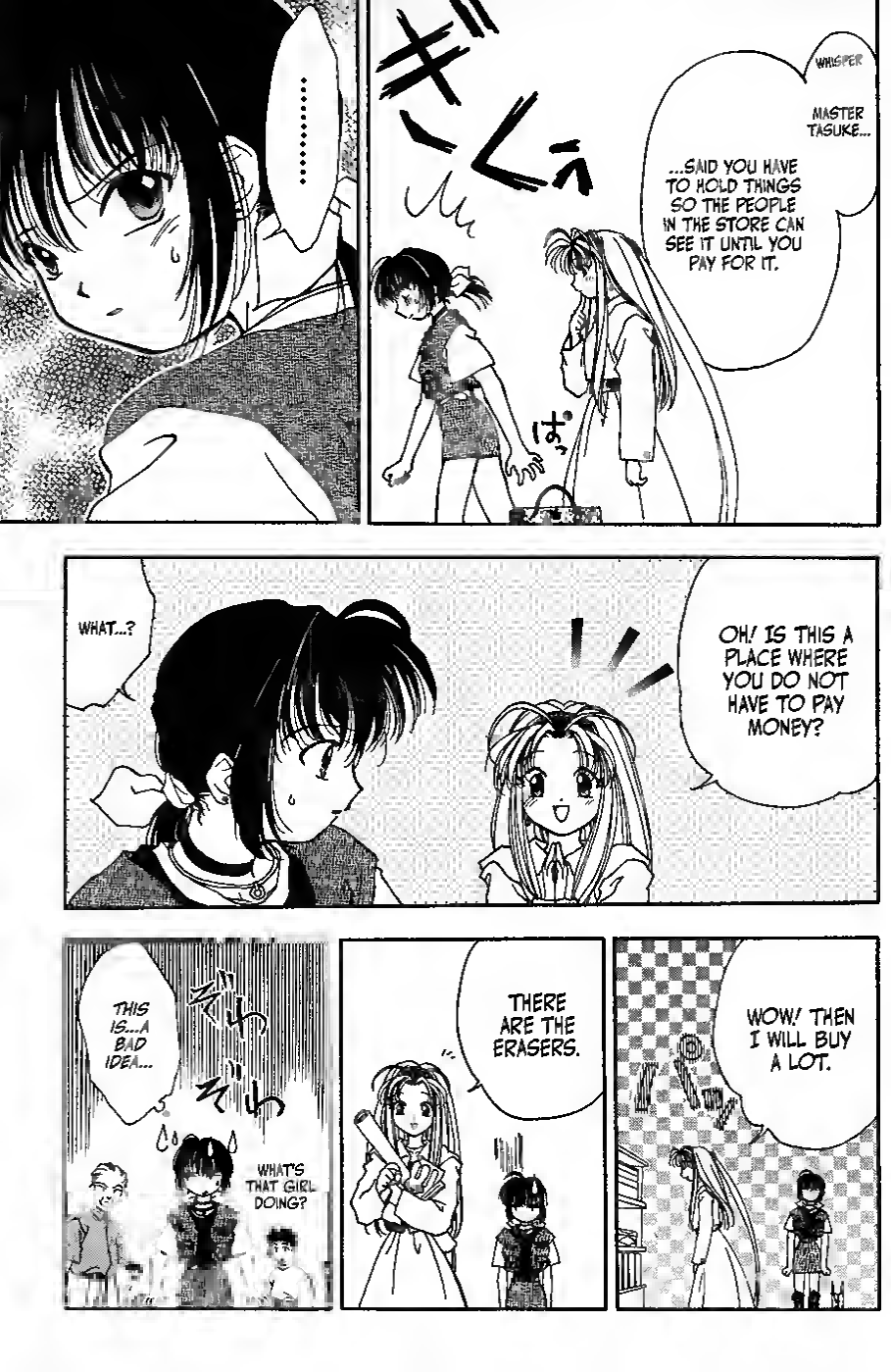
YOU CAN'T GO SHOPPING DRESSED LIKE THAT.
MASTER'S ROOM
YOU CAN BORROW SOME OF MY BIG SISTER'S CLOTHES.
IT'S A GOOD THING SHE'S IN EGYPT NOW AND WON'T BE BACK SOON...
MY FAMILY IS SO...
ギィィィ
WHOA...
.....
もわ
TH-THIS IS...
もふもふ
ALL MY SISTER'S STUFF IS TOO REVEALING!!
THIS IS BAD!!
SHAO SHOULDN'T WEAR THINGS LIKE THIS!!
I SHOULDN'T EVEN IMAGINE HER WEARING IT!!
はぅ
OH...
I GUESS THIS ONE IS OKAY.
IT'S DECENT...

...HUH?
HERE. THANK YOU FOR THE CLOTHES.
MASTER TASUKE.
DOES THIS LOOK OKAY?
Y-YEAH.
WHAT A RELIEF...
HAAA...
OKAY, LET US GET GOING!
HOW DID SHE GIVE ME BACK THE CLOTHES SHE'S WEARING?
I GUESS THERE'S NO HAORI IN THAT.
DID SHE USE ANOTHER HOSHIGAMI?
WAIT, WHAT?
HOSHIGAMI: JYOGYO COORDINATES SHAO'S OUTFITS AND IS TWO GODS IN ONE.

MASTER TASUKE, MASTER TASUKE!!
NVE
THERE ARE SO MANY PEOPLE!!
AMAZING! AMAZING!
UH... DON'T GET TOO EXCITED..

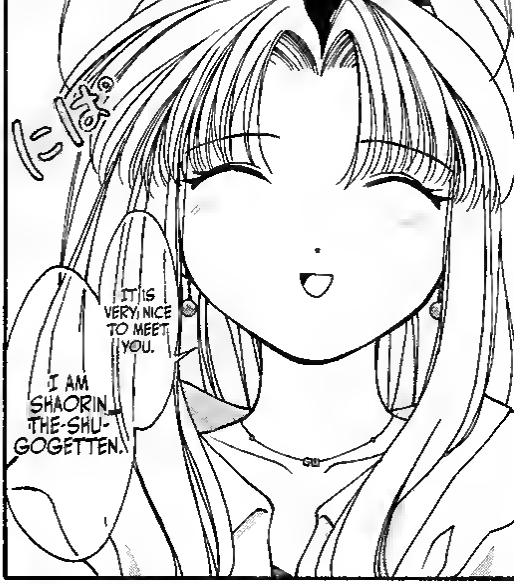
YOU STILL HAVE A LOT TO LEARN.
WHAT?!
NO, THAT'S OKAY. JUST BECAUSE I TAUGHT YOU HOW DOESN'T MEAN YOU CAN DO IT RIGHT AWAY
I CAN GO BUY SOMETHING BY MYSELF NOW!!
MASTER TASUKE, THANK YOU FOR TEACHING ME HOW TO SHOP!
H-HOW ABOUT AN ERASER?
WHAT...?
I-I ASKED YOU NOT TO PUT YOUR FACE SO CLOSE...
WHAT SHOULD I BUY?
I WILL BE FINE.
WELL, IF SHE GETS CONFUSED SHE'LL JUST COME BACK, RIGHT? MAYBE?
I WONDER IF SHE'LL BE OKAY... ACK, OF COURSE SHE WON'T BE OKAY!
WHOOPS! I DIDN'T MEAN TO...
. SAY ANYTHING
AN ERASER IT IS! JUST LEAVE IT TO ME!!

THERE IT IS.
THE STORE THAT SELLS ERASERS.
SIGN READS "THE ORIGINAL STATIONARY STORE"
.....
HELLO! I WILL BE VISITING!
スー
WELCOME!
ERASER, ERASER...
ふっ


WHISPER
MASTER TASUKE...
...SAID YOU HAVE TO HOLD THINGS SO THE PEOPLE IN THE STORE CAN SEE IT UNTIL YOU PAY FOR IT.
ぱっ
.....
OH! IS THIS A PLACE WHERE YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PAY MONEY?
WHAT...?
WOW! THEN I WILL BUY A LOT.
THERE ARE THE ERASERS.
THIS IS...A BAD IDEA...
WHAT'S THAT GIRL DOING?

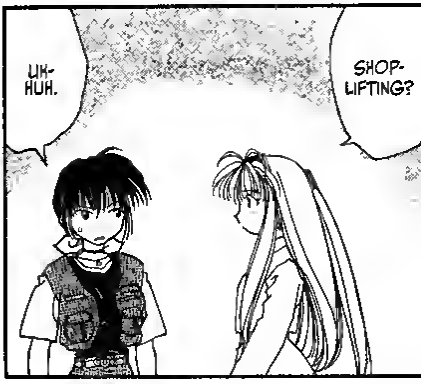
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE!
GET OVER HERE!!
YOU HAVE FORGOTTEN YOUR BAG.
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT!
じ——
WH-WHAT...?!!
IT'S NOT POLITE TO STARE LIKE THAT
ほっ
LOOKS LIKE THEY DIDN'T FOLLOW US.
WELL, WE DIDN'T ACTUALLY STEAL ANYTHING
SO, YOU..
WHY'D YOU BLOW MY COVER LIKE THAT?

I DO NOT MEAN TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT, BUT SHOULD YOU LEAVE YOUR BAG IN THE STORE?
SH-SHUGO-GETTEN?
A WHAT?


NIKO
I AM SHAORIN THE-SHU-GOGETTEN.
IT IS VERY NICE TO MEET YOU.

YOU SAW ME SHOPLIFTING, DIDN'T YOU?
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

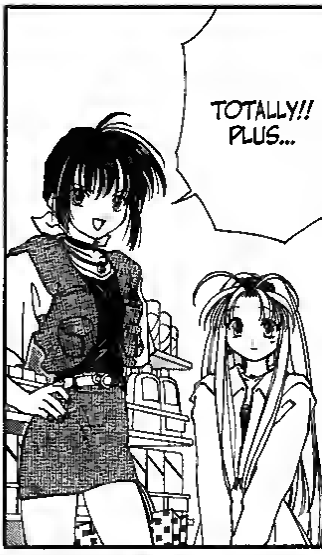
SERI-OUSLY?
WHAT IS SHOP-LIFTING?


UH-HUH.
SHOP-LIFTING?

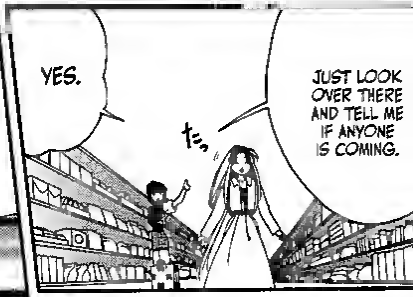
MASTER TASUKE DID NOT SAY THERE WERE THESE WONDERFUL PLACES WHERE YOU NEED NOT PAY.
BUT I WAS SO SURPRISED.
YOU'RE ..
...TOO MUCH!
PEEP!
?
WHAT AN ODD DUCK...
HE PROBABLY FORGOT TO TELL ME ABOUT THEM
OH, THAT MASTER TASUKE
IS SHE...?
SHE SEEMS LEGITIMATELY OBLIVIOUS.
I'M SHOUKO YAMANOBE. IT'S NICE TO MEET YOU.
HEY, YOU WANT...
...TO HELP ME SHOP FOR A LITTLE BIT?

ARE THERE OTHER PLACES WHERE YOU DO NOT HAVE TO PAY MONEY?
SUPER MUSASHI
MISS SHOUKO.

...SOMETHING REALLY GOOD HAPPENS!!
...IF YOU CAN GET THINGS OUT OF THE STORE WITHOUT ANYONE NOTICING...
OH MY!!


TOTALLY!! PLUS...

AHHH!!


YES.
JUST LOOK OVER THERE AND TELL ME IF ANYONE IS COMING.

.....

EEK! HE'S... WOW!
WHAT IS IT?
MISS SHOUKO, NO ONE CAN GET NEAR US WITH HIM AROUND!
!!
HOSHIGAMI: GUNNANMON
GOD OF THE CONSTELLATION ANDROMEDA. THE GREAT CELESTIAL GENERAL SO IMPOSING THAT NO ONE WILL GO NEAR HIM AND THUS IS THE ULTIMATE GUARD
SERIOUSLY, WHAT IS UP WITH YOU?
WHATEVER, JUST RUN FOR IT!
SHOULDN'T YOU BE RUNNING AWAY?
TAKUYA, DON'T GO NEAR HIM.
MAMA, HE'S HUGE!
COME DOWN FROM THERE!!
HEY!!

WHAT IN THE WORLD WAS THAT..
...THAT MEGA HUGE BEAST THING?
HAA.. SHEESH ..
ALL THIS RUNNING JUST BECAUSE OF YOU.
STAR
THEY ARE CALLED HOSHIGAMI AND COME FROM THIS SHITENRIN AND..
WHAT IS SHE TALKING ABOUT?
WHERE ARE YOU?
COME BACK...
SHA
OOH, I GET IT.
SO YOU HAVE AN AMAZING BAG OF TRICKS.
WHAT ELSE CAN YOU BRING OUT OF THERE?
UMM...

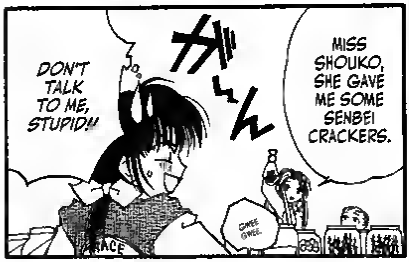
GWEE!
OKAY!! AS LONG AS I HAVE THIS GUY...
HOSHIGAMI KOKA
GOD OF THE CONSTELLATION DELPHINI, THE DOLPHIN HAS A BOTTOMLESS STOMACH THAT HOLDS AS MUCH AS YOU CAN FIT IN IT.
THIS OLD LADY IS SO SENILE I COULD PROBABLY STEAL THE WHOLE STORE.
WELL, I WON'T GO QUITE THAT FAR...
YOU DON'T NEED MONEY HERE EITHER?
NOPE!!
YOU CAN JUST LOOK AROUND.
GWEE.
はっ
MA'AM.
HERE YOU GO, EAT AS MUCH AS YOU WANT!!
YOU CAN SPIT IT OUT LATER.
GWEE

THAT'S SWEET OF YOU, HON.
BUT I RUN THIS STORE BY MYSELF...
SO I HAVE TO STAY ON DUTY.
OH, I SEE.

YOU OUGHT TO FIND A BED TO SLEEP IN.
IT MUST NOT BE COMFORTABLE...
...SLEEPING OUT HERE.

HEY HEY
DON'T TALK TO HER!
THANK YOU
WHY, THAT'D BE WONDERFUL!
GWEE

MA'AM.
WOULD IT BE ALL RIGHT...
...IF I HELPED YOU?
HUH?


DON'T TALK TO ME, STUPID!!
MISS SHOUKO, SHE GAVE ME SOME SENBEI CRACKERS.
GWEE GWEE

JEEZ.
LET'S GO, AIRHEAD!
I WILL VISIT YOU AGAIN, NA NN.
YES, DO COME BACK.

OH! SHAO!!
THERE SHE IS
SIGH...
I'M SO STUPID.
I KNEW THIS WOULD HAPPEN.
HEY, CHECK IT OUT! IT THREW UP ALL THE SNACKS!
WHAT IS WRONG, KOKA?
SHAO!!
WHERE DID SHE GO?
THAT'S...
WHAT? SHE'S WITH SOMEONE
HOW PATHETIC
BUT KOKA LOOKS OKAY NOW
KOKA SAYS THE SNACKS GOT STUCK IN HIS THROAT BECAUSE HE ATE TOO MUCH AT ONCE
GWEEL
HEY! THEY'RE GOING INTO THE BOOKSTORE
OKAY, LET'S TRY THIS AGAIN
SHIO...
すずーん
OH BROTHER.
...SHOUKO YAMANOBE, THE BIGGEST TROUBLEMAKER IN MY CLASS.

IF WE SUCCEED SOMETHING GOOD WILL HAPPEN, RIGHT?
...!
HUH? OH, RIGHT.
I SAID THAT, DIDN'T I?
OKAY!!
THIS TIME YOU BETTER SUCCEED, GOT IT?
DON'T GET STUFF STUCK IN YOUR THROAT AGAIN.
AS LONG AS NO ONE FINDS OUT.
SORRY, SOMEONE HAS ALREADY FOUND OUT.

EEK!
TASUKE SHICHIRI!!
OH...
WOW, WHAT A COINCIDENCE! WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE, TASUKE?
THAT'S WHAT I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU!!
SHOPLIFTING IS WRONG!
RETURN THE STUFF YOU STOLE AND APOLOGIZE!

H-HEY, LOOK, CAN WE TALK ABOUT THIS LATER?
.....
THAT WEIRD GIRL'S LITTLE CRITTER IS EATING BOOKS RIGHT NOW.
むしゃむしゃ
I'LL APOLOGIZE, BUT HOW ARE YOU GOING TO EXPLAIN THAT ONE?
ガラっ
WHAT?!
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, QUICK!
HEY! DON'T LEAVE ME!!
GWEE.
GWEE.
SHAO!!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?!
GWEE GWEE

KOKA, DID YOU GET SOMETHING STUCK IN YOUR THROAT AGAIN?
HUMPH. USELESS.
IT THREW IT ALL UP AGAIN?
HEY, SHOUKO!
WHY DID YOU MAKE SHAO HELP YOU ANYWAY?!

SHAO DOESN'T KNOW ANY BETTER, YOU KNOW!
EXACTLY. I HAD HER HELP ME BECAUSE SHE DOESN'T KNOW ANY BETTER.
IT'S HER FAULT FOR NOT KNOWING ANYTHING.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!

?!
YOU'RE ONE TO TA--
MASTER TASUKE
PLEASE DO NOT GET MAD
MISS SHOUKO IS NOT A BAD PERSON.
I AM A SHUGO-GETTEN
I CAN TELL JUST BY LOOKING AT SOMEONE.

UH...WELL, ONCE OR TWICE.
MISS SHOUKO...
...HAVE YOU EVER SUCCEEDED AT SHOPLIFTING?
.....
BUT, YOU KNOW, SHAO...
...WHAT WE CALL SHOPLIFTING IS--
は。
DID SOME-THING...
...REALLY GOOD HAPPEN?
.....

I FEEL LIKE...
OF COURSE ...
...NOTHING GOOD HAPPENED.
...AND HOW I TALK...
...JUST FROM WHAT I LOOK LIKE...
...EVERYONE JUDGES WHAT KIND OF PERSON I AM...
IT MAKES ME FEEL KIND OF LIKE AN OUTSIDER.

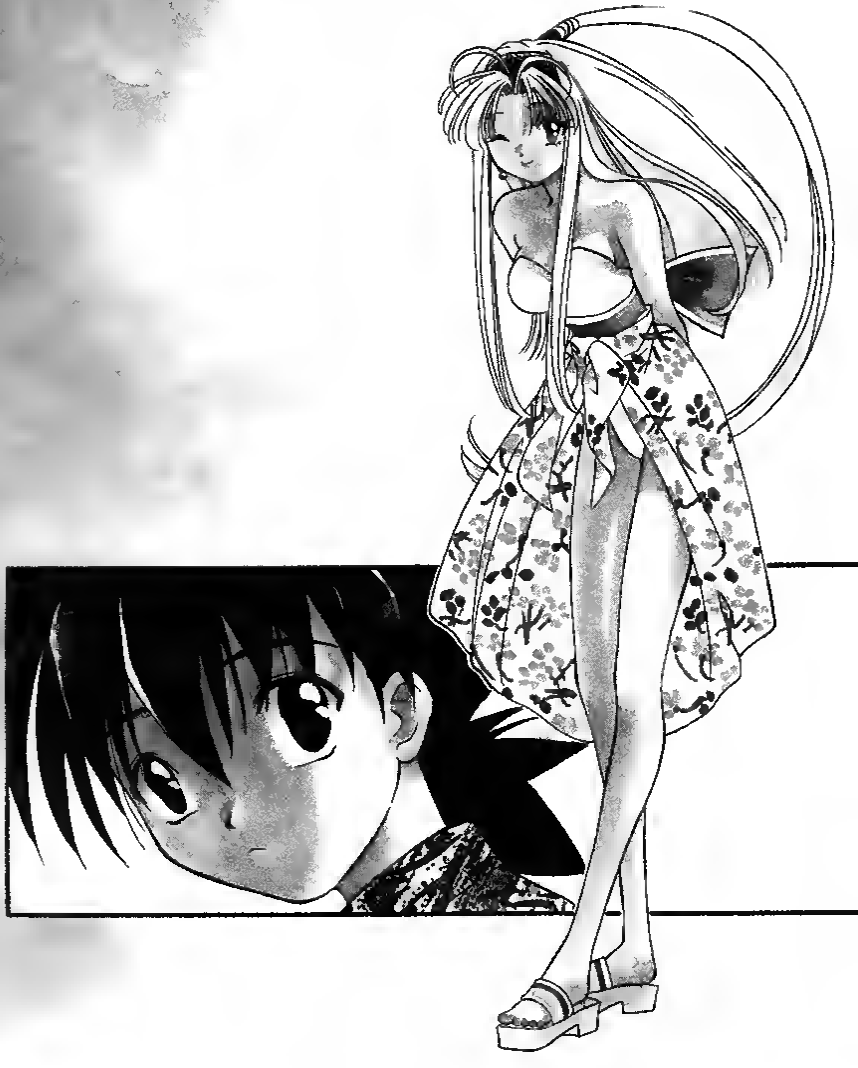
I JUST DID IT TO BE THE KIND OF PERSON EVERYONE ALREADY THOUGHT I WAS.
I KNEW NOTHING GOOD WOULD COME OF IT...
WHAT'S--?
すっ
YOU CAN HAVE THIS BOOK, MISS SHOUKO.
YOU DIDN'T STEAL THIS, DID YOU?
THAT'S
カー
.....

I STILL DO NOT QUITE UNDERSTAND THIS MODERN WORLD OR ANYTHING MUCH ABOUT IT...
NO. I WANTED TO GIVE IT TO YOU...
...SO I PAID MONEY FOR IT.
...BUT I HAD A LOT OF FUN TODAY!
THIS IS TO THANK YOU.
SHE USED MY MONEY FOR THAT...
WELL, THAT'S BETTER THAN...

I CAN'T FIGURE HER OUT.
GRANDMA'S BOOK OF AMAZING KNOWLEDGE
WHAT A STRANGE PERSON...
SURE.
MISS SHOUKO, LET US SEE EACH OTHER AGAIN, ALL RIGHT?
OH, THAT'S RIGHT! MASTER TASUKE...
ぴたっ
WH-
WHAT?
ぴえ
HUH, WHAT--?
WHAAAT?!!

MISS SHOUKO TAUGHT ME THAT.
SHE SAID IT WOULD MAKE YOU HAPPY, MASTER TASUKE.
SHE SAID IT WAS IN EXCHANGE FOR THE BOOK.
?!
...HUH?
CLOSE YOUR EYES AND PUT YOUR FACE AS CLOSE TO HIS AS YOU CAN!!
I'M SURE IT'LL MAKE TASUKE HAPPY!!
AND THEN LET WHATEVER HAPPENS HAPPEN
MASTER TASUKE, ARE YOU HAPPY?
THAT IS WHAT SHE TOLD ME.
?
SHOUKO STIRS UP TROUBLE WHEREVER SHE GOES.
MEH.

# CHAPTER 4
# LET'S GO TO THE BEACH!



...I CAN'T SLEEP.
IT'S NOT JUST BECAUSE IT'S HOT.
I'LL GET SOME WATER OR SOMETHING
I'VE BEEN FEELING SELF-CONSCIOUS AROUND SHAO SINCE SUMMER VACATION STARTED, AND SHE'S ALWAYS WITH ME...
I'M SO HAPPY THAT MASTER TAGUKE IS HOME ALL THE TIME.
CONSIDERING SHAO AND I SLEEP UNDER THE SAME ROOF EVERY NIGHT...

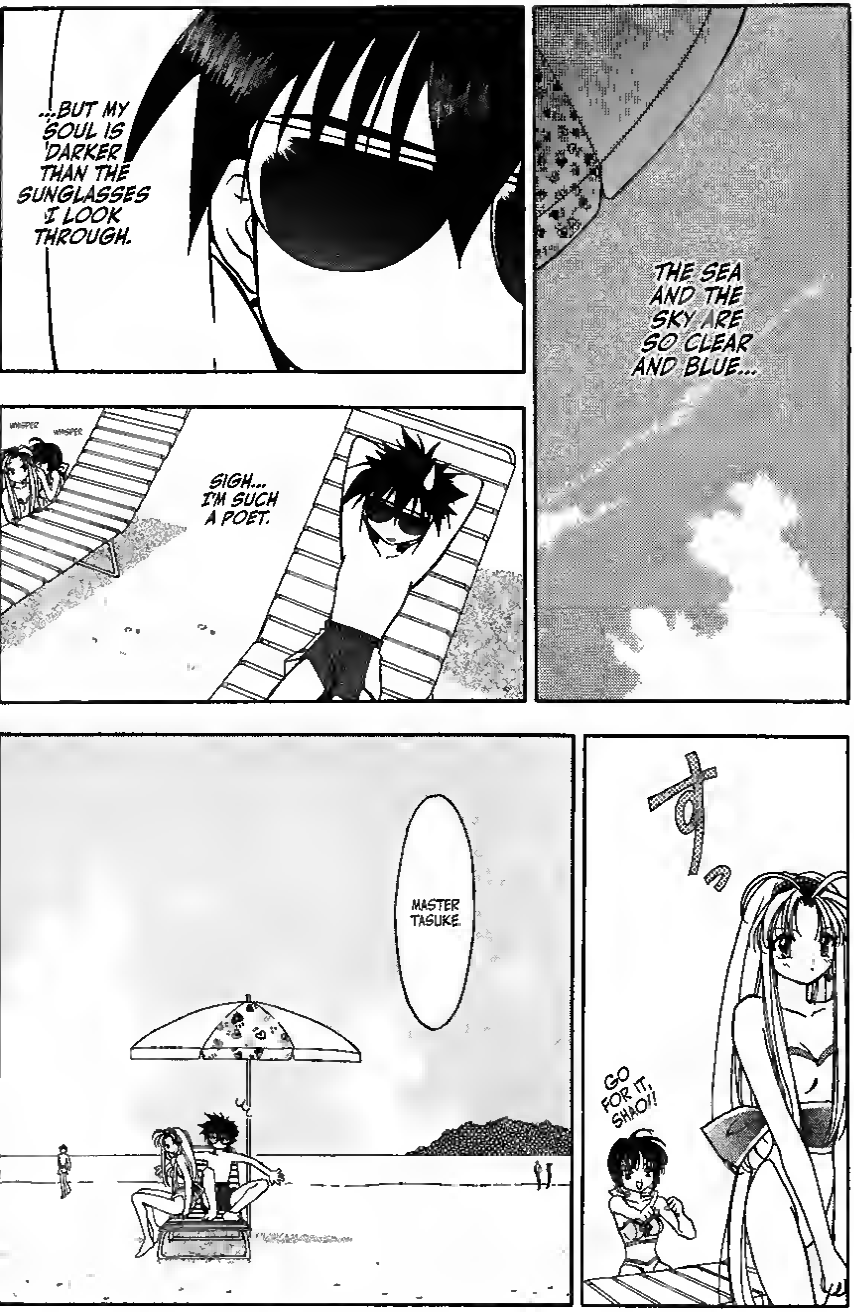
I BET SHE'S REALLY CUTE WHEN SHE'S ASLEEP.
OH... SHAO'S ROOM.
...I GUESS IT WOULD BE WEIRDER NOT TO BE SELF-CONSCIOUS AROUND HER.
SHAO'S ROOM
MAYBE I'LL JUST TAKE A LITTLE PEEK...
NO! I CAN'T!!
I SAID NO!!
BUT... JUST FOR A SECOND WOULDN'T REALLY...
そぉー
I COULDN'T FACE HER TOMORROW MORNING IF I DID THAT!
WHAT AM I THINKING?!

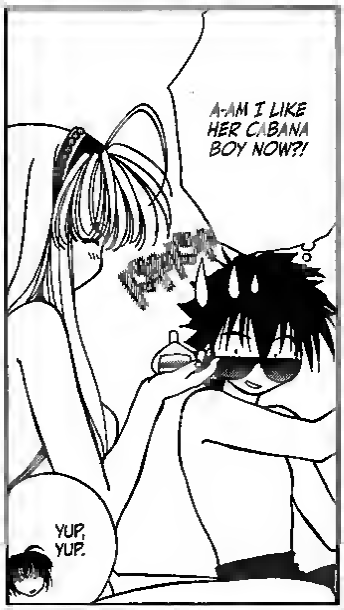
WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH MASTER TASUKE? YOU LOOK LOST.
!!
!!
ぼーー
CHEEP CHEEP
IT'S NOTHING. NOTHING AT ALL.
Y-YES, REALLY!!
I KEEP TELLING YOU NOT TO PUT YOUR FACE SO CLOSE TO MINE!
MASTER TASUKE DO NOT HURT YOURSELF
REALLY?

MISS SHOUKO!!
HI! COME ON, LET'S ALL GO TO THE BEACH!!
YOU SHOULDN'T STAY COOPED UP AT HOME.
DING DONG
YEEES?!
OH MY.
THE BEACH...
YOU ARE LIKE A SAVIOR, LIKE A RADIANT GODDESS! WELL ...JUST FOR TODAY, ANYWAY.
WHAT IS UP WITH YOU?
Y-YEAH, WELL...
I ALMOST FORGOT!! YOU HAVE TO GO TO THE BEACH DURING SUMMER VACATION, RIGHT?!
THANKS FOR INVITING US, SHOUKO
WHERE THE WAVES CAN WASH THESE NAUGHTY THOUGHTS OUT OF MY HEAD!
TO THE BEACH!

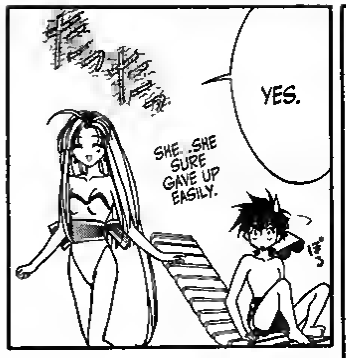
THE SHINING SUN.
THE WHITE BEACH.
THE BLUE SEA.
LET THEM WASH AWAY MY DIRTY DESIRES.
AND THE SALTY WIND THAT GENTLY TICKLES MY SKIN.
SHAO.
MASTER TASUKE.
LOOK AT ME! REFRESHED AND CLEAN!
SIGH
I'M GLAD WE CAME.

I APOLOGIZE FOR MAKING YOU WAIT FOR ME.
AREN'T YOU GOING TO SWIM, TASUKE?
GASP! I FORGOT!! GIRLS WEAR SWIMSUITS AT THE BEACH!!
SEXY SWIMSUITS!
FOR SOME REASON, MASTER TASUKE DOES NOT SEEM TO HAVE MUCH ENERGY LATELY.
HE'S GOT PLENTY OF ONE KIND OF ENERGY.
MASTER TASUKE, DO YOU FEEL SICK?
WHAT?!
N-NOT REALLY...
FBIET
THIS IS KIND OF AMUSING.

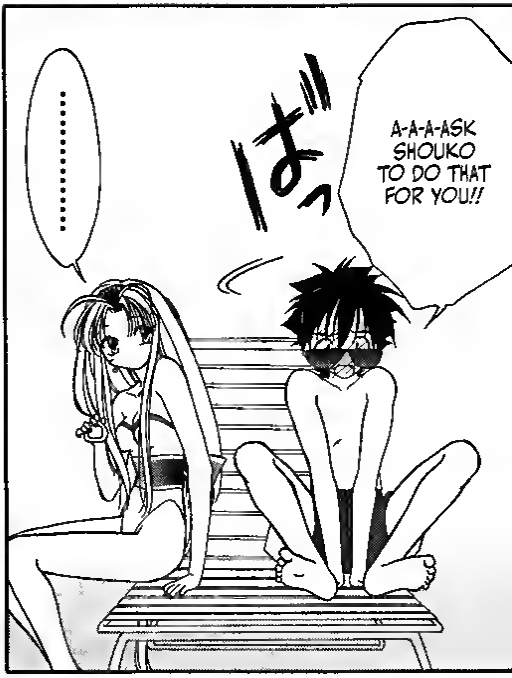

...BUT MY SOUL IS DARKER THAN THE SUNGLASSES I LOOK THROUGH.
THE SEA AND THE SKY ARE SO CLEAR AND BLUE...
WHISPER
WHISPER
SIGH... I'M SUCH A POET.
MASTER TASUKE.
すぅ
GO FOR IT, SHAO!!


A-AM I LIKE HER CABANA BOY NOW?!
YUP, YUP.

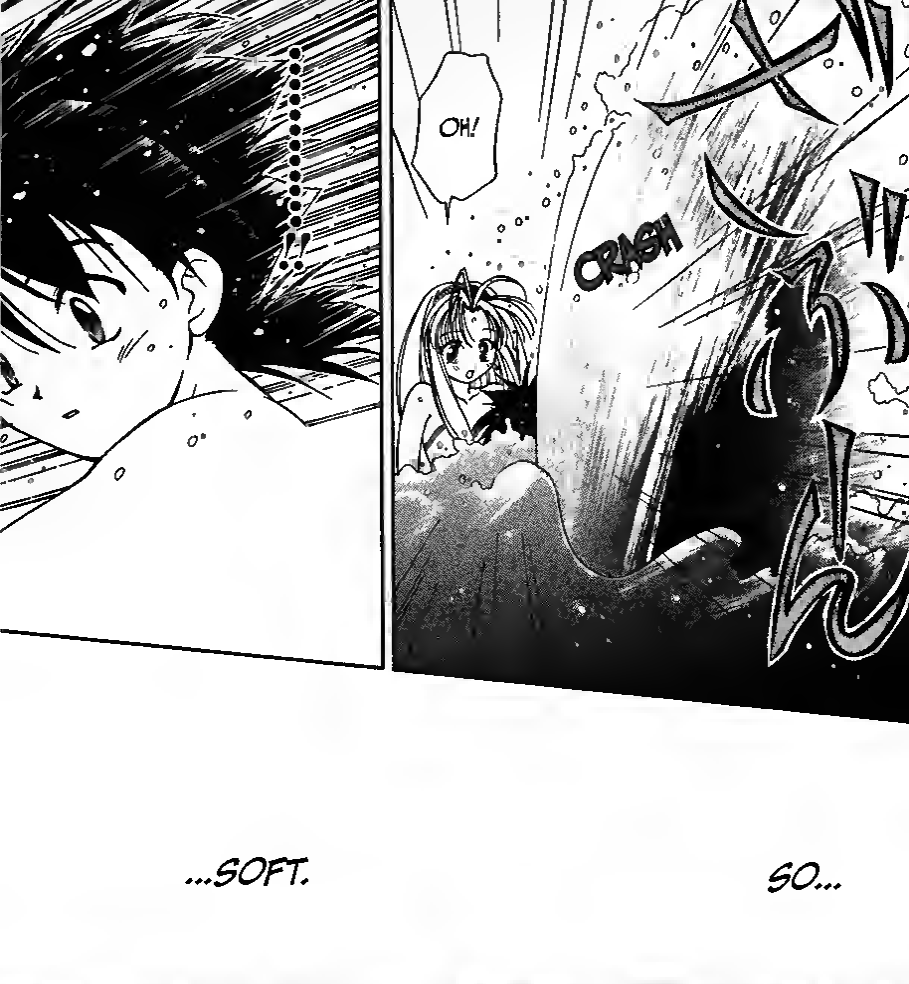
WOULD YOU PLEASE PUT THIS STUFF CALLED OIL ON ME?
HUUH?!


YES.
SHE.. SHE SURE GAVE UP EASILY.

MISS SHOUKO, WOULD YOU PLEASE PUT IT ON ME?
SIGH.. YOU KNOW..

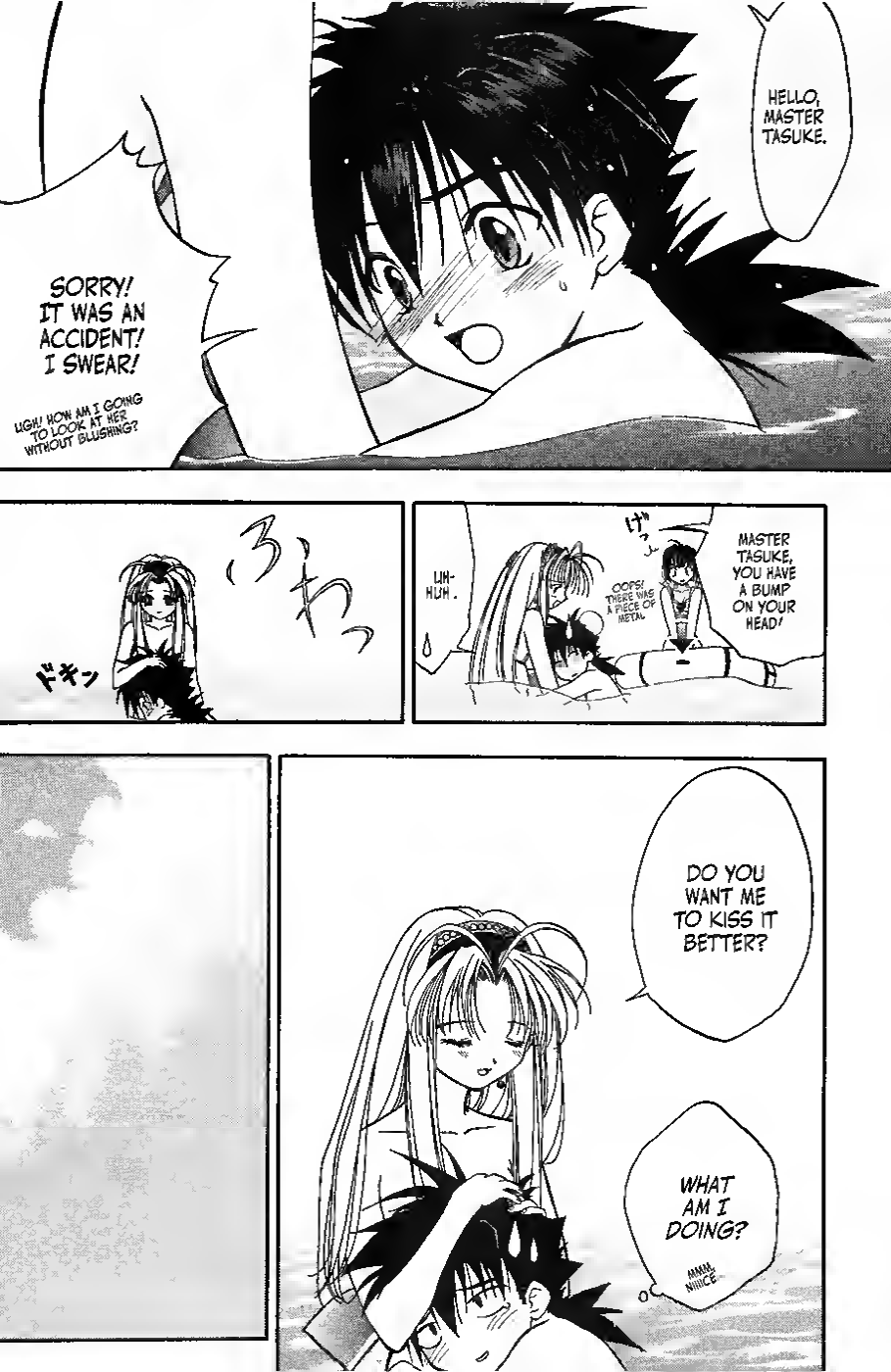

A-A-A-ASK SHOUKO TO DO THAT FOR YOU!!
.....
ばっ

OH FOR CHRIST'S SAKE...
YAY! THIS IS FUN!
EXPO-NENTIALLY WORSE
THIS IS EVEN WORSE THAN BEFORE.
MAYBE THE BEACH WASN'T THE BEST IDEA.
OH! TASUKE, LOOK OUT!
WAAH!
I SHOULD HAVE STAYED HOME...




...SOFT.

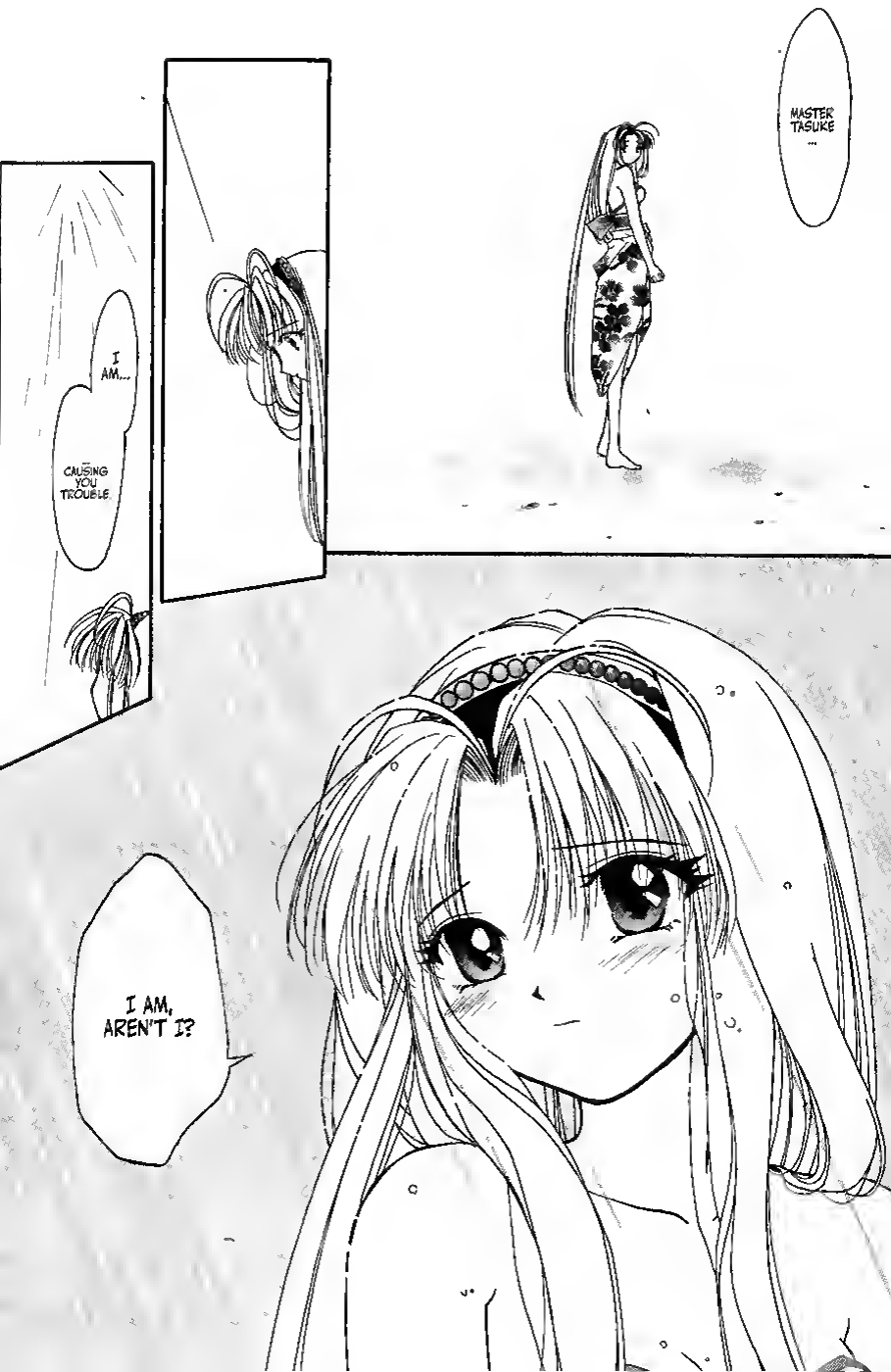
SO...


HELLO, MASTER TASUKE.
SORRY! IT WAS AN ACCIDENT! I SWEAR!
UGH! HOW AM I GOING TO LOOK AT HER WITHOUT BLUSHING?
ドキッ
MASTER TASUKE, YOU HAVE A BUMP ON YOUR HEAD!
げっ
OOPS! THERE WAS A PIECE OF METAL
UM-HUM.
DO YOU WANT ME TO KISS IT BETTER?
WHAT AM I DOING?
MMM NNNCE

HERE, MASTER TASUKE
I BROUGHT YOU SOME ICE CREAM.
DON'T LEAVE ME, SUN!
COME BACK!
WHY IS HE RAISING HIS HAND?
IT LOOKS LIKE...
...THE FOG IS COMING IN.
EVEN THE SUN IS ASHAMED OF ME.
THANKS.
GEE
WOW! IT IS LIKE FROZEN SILK! ♡
I HAVE NEVER HAD ICE CREAM BEFORE.
REEEALLY?
THAT'S CRAZY!
MAYBE THIS WILL COOL ME OFF.
ちょこん

MASTER TASUKE.
YOU CAN HAVE MINE.
HERE.
I HAVE HAD ENOUGH.
MMM-HMM.
OH.
OH NO!! MY ICE CREAM!
AN INDIRECT ...
POOF
...KISS!
WHAT?
ENOUGH ALREADY!
MASTER TASUKE?
A LATE BLOOMER... HE MUST BE AN ENDANGERED SPECIES.
ARGH! GO AWAY! GO AWAY!

I'M GOING TO GO CRAZY IF I HANG AROUND SHAO...NY LONGER.
UMM...
MASTER TASUKE, WAIT...
MASTER TASUKE
PLEASE LEAVE ME ALONE!!

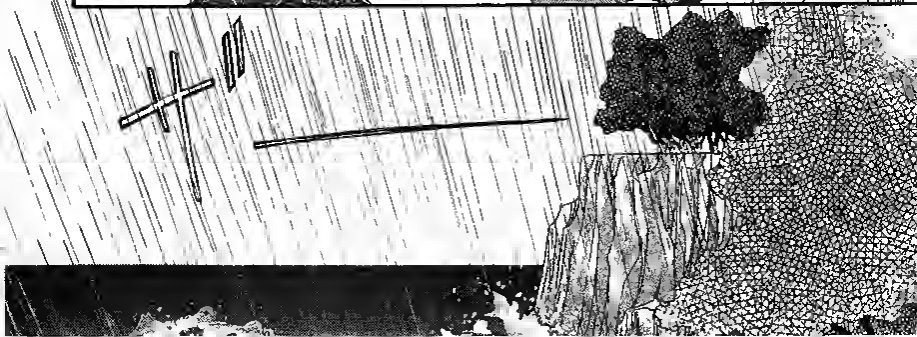

MASTER TASUKE ...
I AM... CAUSING YOU TROUBLE
I AM, AREN'T I?

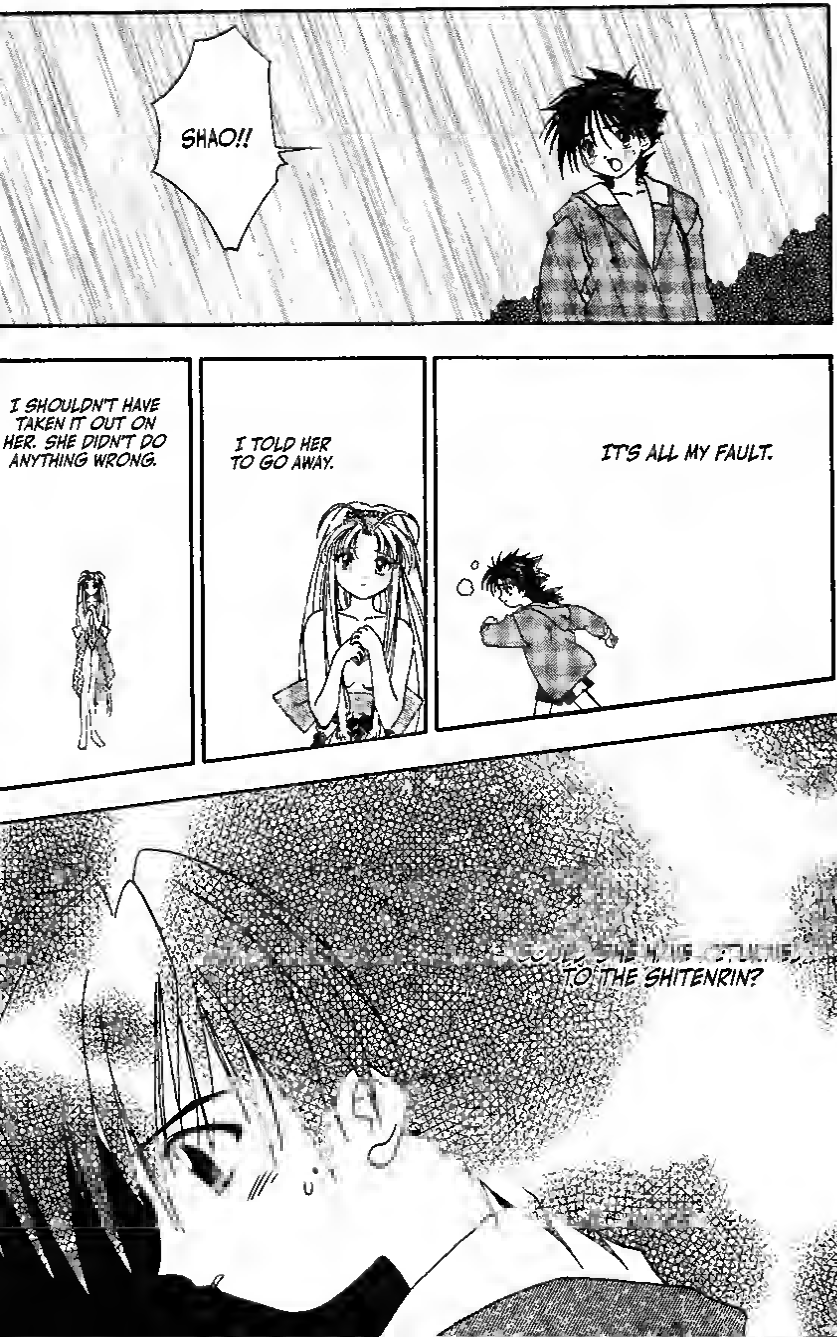
I WAS LOOKING FOR YOU GUYS.
WHERE'S SHAO?
WHY ARE YOU SO PERKY?
CHILL OUT, IT'S RAINING.

HEY, TASUKE!!

ISN'T SHE WITH YOU?
とまる

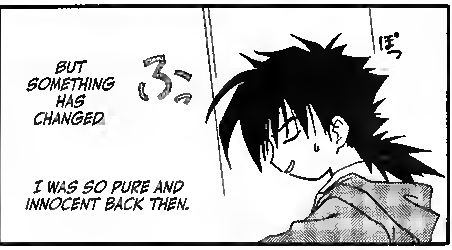
WHAT?!
NO, SHE FOLLOWED YOU!
I HAVEN'T SEEN HER SINCE




SHAO!!
IT'S ALL MY FAULT.
I TOLD HER TO GO AWAY.
I SHOULDN'T HAVE TAKEN IT OUT ON HER. SHE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG.
TO THE SHITENRIN?

...SHAO.
...
OH...

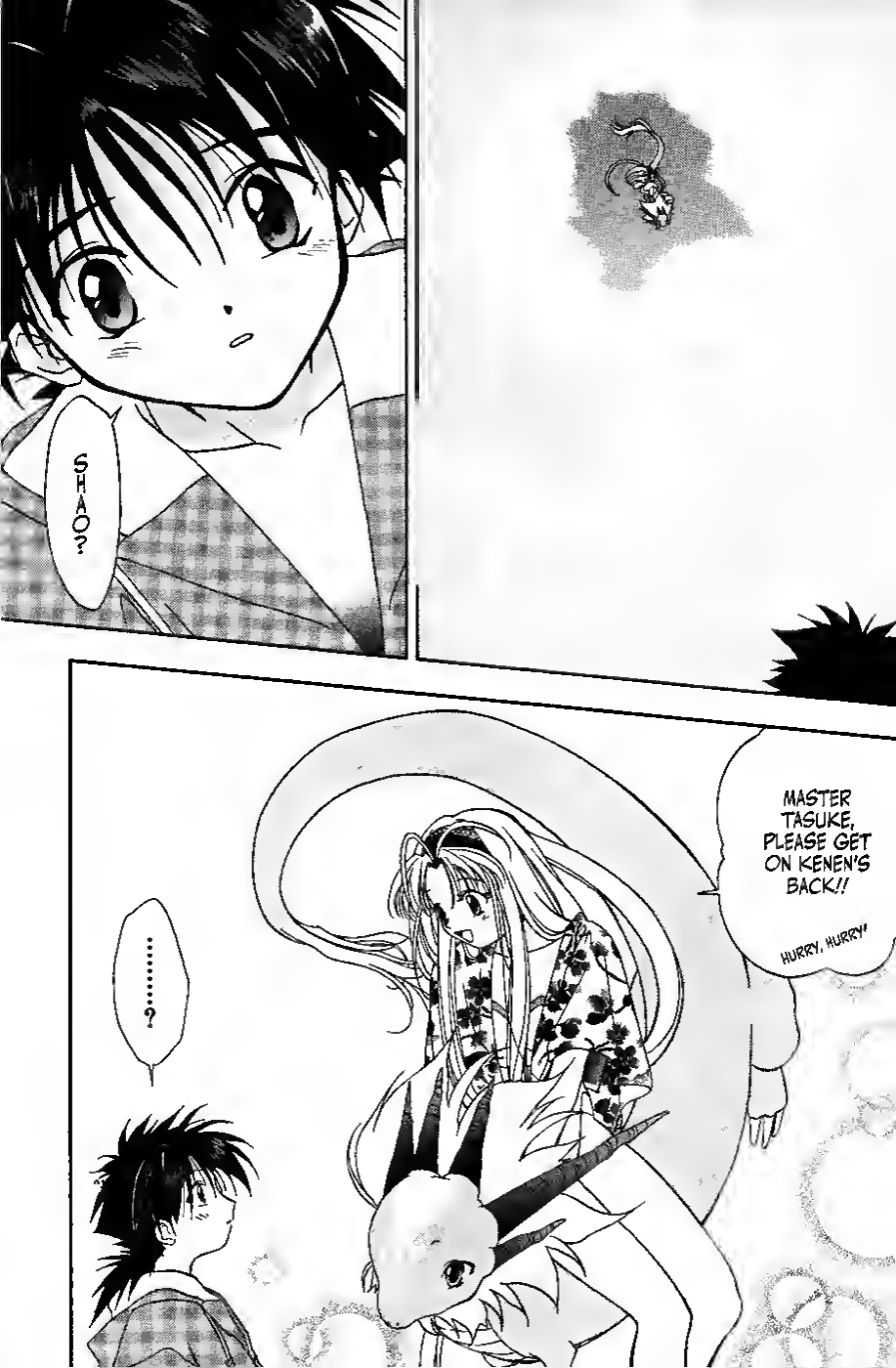
AT FIRST I WAS SO LONELY BEING HOME ALONE ALL THE TIME THAT I JUST WANTED HER TO STAY WITH ME
I THINK THE LONELINESS WOULD PROBABLY JUST DISAPPEAR


BUT SOMETHING HAS CHANGED.
I WAS SO PURE AND INNOCENT BACK THEN.

"IF YOU WERE BY MY SIDE..."

...SHAO.

.....


SHAO?
MASTER TASUKE, PLEASE GET ON KENEN'S BACK!!
HURRY, HURRY!
.....?

THERE IS SOMETHING I WANT TO SHOW YOU, MASTER TASUKE.
SHAO!!
WHAT IS IT? WHERE ARE WE GOING?
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU HAVE NOT BEEN FEELING WELL LATELY.
.....
I THOUGHT IT WAS BECAUSE OF ME...
...AND IT MADE ME SAD.

BUT I SAW THIS AND IT MADE ME FEEL BETTER, SO...
...I THOUGHT IT WOULD MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER TOO.
SHE WAS WORRIED ABOUT ME.
I...
...STILL DO NOT UNDERSTAND YOUR WORLD AND KEEP DOING THE WRONG THINGS.
I MAKE TROUBLE FOR YOU, DON'T I, MASTER TASUKE?

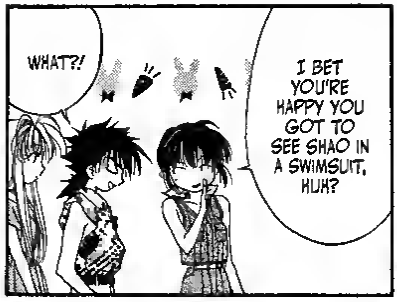
THAT'S WHY...
...I THOUGHT I SHOULD RETURN TO THE SHITENRIN.
ドキーン
BUT THEN...

...I WANTED TO SHOW YOU THIS RAINBOW.
THIS IS WHY I DECIDED NOT TO GO.

...HAD ALL THOSE STUPID THOUGHTS...
...AND MADE SHAO WORRY.
I...
SHAO IS SO KIND.

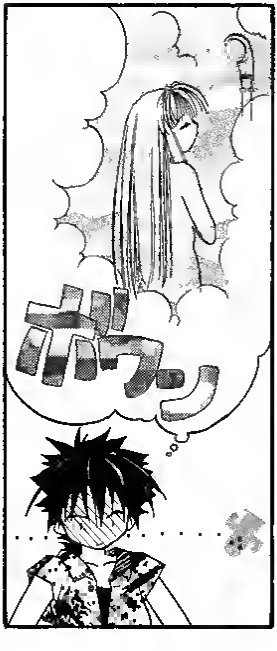
THAT WAS ENOUGH.
...STANDS BY ME.
AND SHE ALWAYS...
GOOD MORNING, MASTER TASUKE
MASTER TASUKE.
I MADE DINNER
I...
MASTER TASUKE

HUH?
OH...
YOU DON'T FEEL...
...ANY BETTER?
OKAY, RAINBOW, I'LL MAKE A VOW!
MUCH BETTER.
YEAH, I FEEL BETTER.
I WON'T THINK ABOUT SHAO IN A WEIRD WAY OR MAKE HER WORRY!!
FROM NOW ON...


I BET YOU'RE HAPPY YOU GOT TO SEE SHAO IN A SWIMSUIT, HUH?
WHAT?!

I HAD A LOT OF FUN TODAY. ♡
SEE YOU GUYS!!

DO I LOOK THAT SHALLOW?
HMM.
?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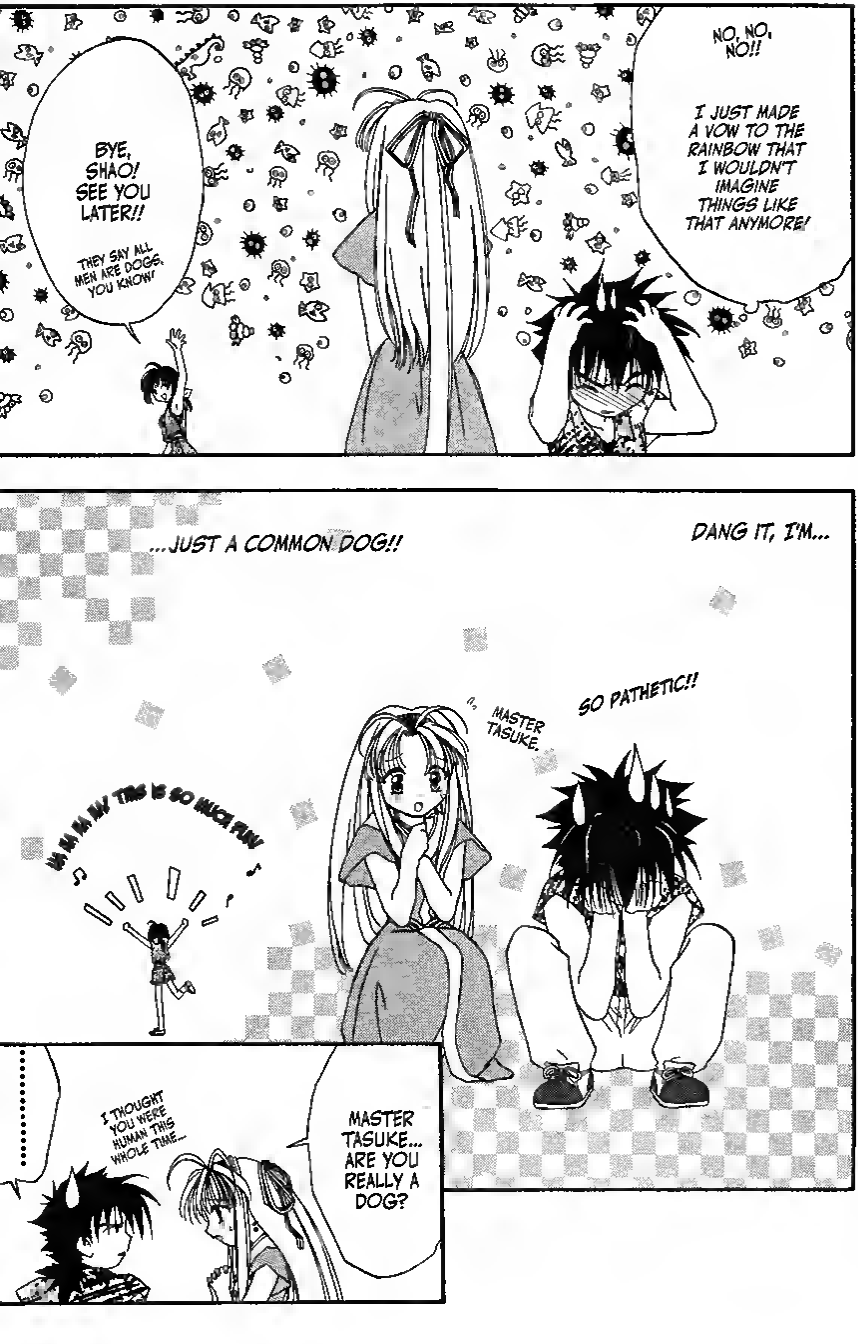
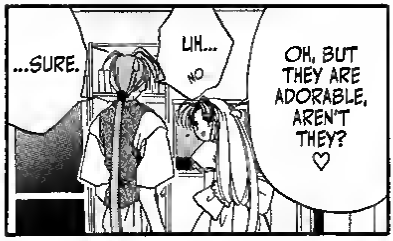
. . . . . .

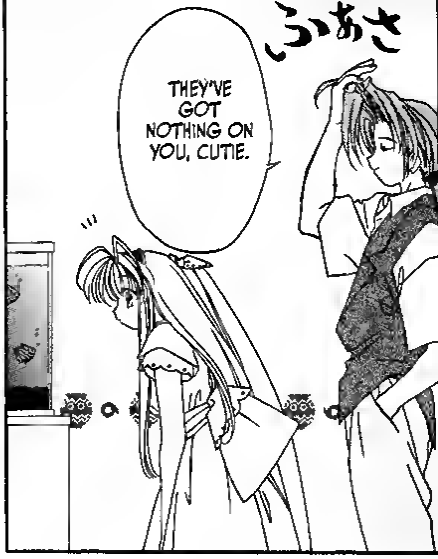
ACTUALLY, WHEN WE WERE IN THE SHOWER I NOTICED...
SHAO'S GOT A PRETTY NICE BODY.
YOU SHOULD SNEAK A PEEK.

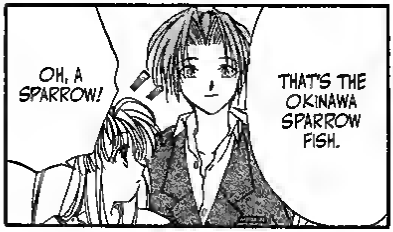

BYE, SHAO! SEE YOU LATER!!
THEY SAY ALL MEN ARE DOGS, YOU KNOW!
NO, NO, NO!!
I JUST MADE A VOW TO THE RAINBOW THAT I WOULDN'T IMAGINE THINGS LIKE THAT ANYMORE!
...JUST A COMMON DOG!!
DANG IT, I'M...
MASTER TASUKE...
SO PATHETIC!!
HA HA HA HA! THIS IS SO MUCH FUN!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE HUMAN THIS WHOLE TIME...
MASTER TASUKE... ARE YOU REALLY A DOG?

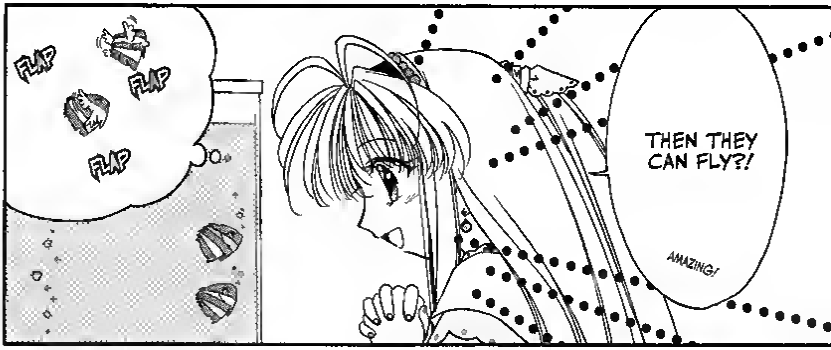
# CHAPTER 5
# A NIGHT AT THE FESTIVAL

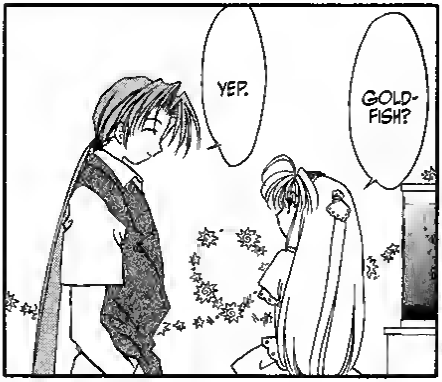
HELLO, FISHIES!
OH. ♡
MARKET SHOUTEN-GAI
IT WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE FISH AT HOME.
THEY ARE SO CUTE.
ENTRANCE TO TASUKE'S HOUSE
ACTUALLY...
...THERE IS AN AQUARIUM IN THE FRONT ENTRANCE, BUT THERE ARE NO FISH IN IT.



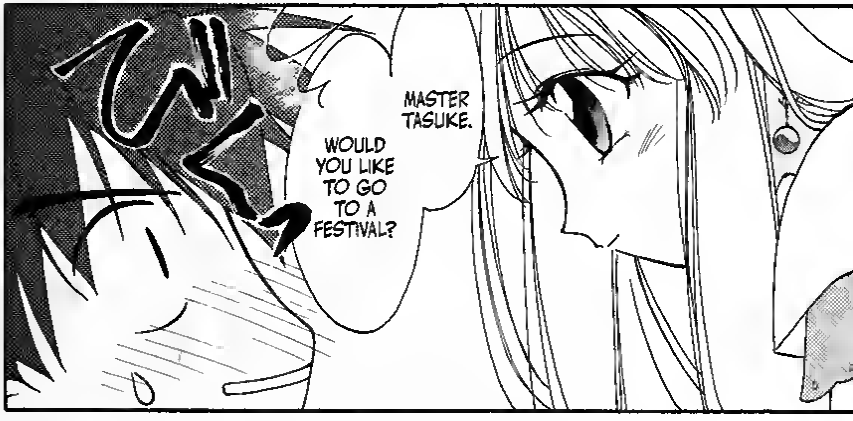



BACKGROUND READS: SHE'S AS PECULIAR AS SHE IS CUTE!

THERE IS A FESTIVAL?
OH, REALLY?!
SPEAKING OF FISH REMINDS ME...
OH
THAT'S RIGHT
...THERE IS A FESTIVAL OVER AT THE TEMPLE TODAY.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO ACCOMPANY ME THERE?
I'LL WIN YOU SOME GOLDFISH AT THE CARNIVAL
HUH?!
PLEASE WAIT...
たったっ
THANK YOU FOR SHARING THIS INFORMATION WITH ME.
MASTER TASUKE?
I MUST TELL MASTER TASUKE.
...IN A REALLY LONG TIME.
I HAVEN'T MET A GIRL WORTH PURSUING...

THE FESTIVAL AT THE MIYAUCHI TEMPLE IS TODAY, ISN'T IT?
I BET SHAO WOULD LOOK CUTE IN ONE OF THESE.
MAYBE SHE'LL WEAR ONE IF I TAKE HER.
OH, LOOK!! YUKATA!


MASTER TASUKE.
WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO TO A FESTIVAL?

IS THIS OUTFIT IN THE PICTURE WHAT I SHOULD WEAR TO THE FESTIVAL?
UM... YEAH.

SOMEONE I MET TOLD ME ABOUT IT.
SHALL WE GO?
OH... UM...ALL RIGHT.

SHE COULDN'T HAVE...
DID SHE JUST READ MY MIND?!
IF SO, THEN SHE KNOWS ABOUT ALL THE DIRTY THOUGHTS I HAD, WHICH WOULD MEAN SHE KNOWS ABOUT THAT NIGHT WHEN I ALMOST WENT INTO HER ROOM AND SHE'S JUST ACTING LIKE SHE DOESN'T KNOW SO SHE WON'T EMBARRASS ME BUT NOW I KNOW SHE KNOWS...
?

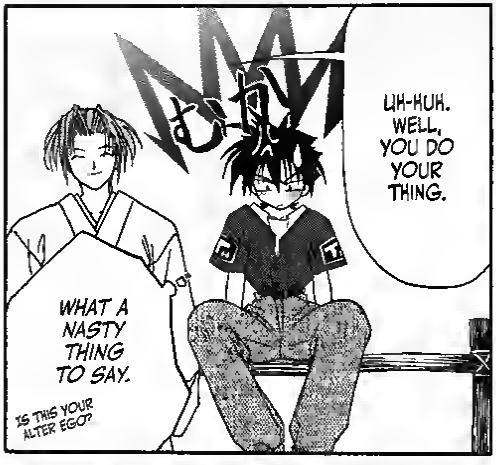
MASTER TASUKE!
UMM... I AM SORRY, BUT THE JYOGYO CANNOT FIGURE OUT HOW TO PUT THIS DRESS ON ME CORRECTLY.
COULD YOU FIX IT?
L-LIKE THIS... MAYBE...
SORRY!

MASTER TASUKE.
FESTIVALS ARE FUN, ARE THEY NOT?
ワイ
ワイ
ワイ
ワイ
YEAH, LOTS OF FUN.
SHE'S CUTE IN A YUKATA TOO.
ぽん
ぽん
OH...

YOU ARE THE MAN FROM THE FISH STORE.
YOU'RE SO RADIANT I RECOGNIZED YOU IMMEDIATELY.
WHAT...?
OH--
OH!! THE HOSHIGAMI LOVE FESTIVALS! I BET THEY WANT TO COME OUT TOO.
...?
BUT IT'S NOT SHINING..
WHO IS HE?!!
WH-WH-WHAT DOES HE WANT?
I SHOULD HAVE MENTIONED...
...THAT I AM A PRIEST AT THIS TEMPLE.
MY NAME IS IZUMO MIYAUCHI.

OOH...
WHILE YOU WERE SHOPPING, HUH?
WHO IS THAT, SHAO?
THAT IS THE MAN WHO TOLD ME ABOUT THE FESTIVAL.
ARE YOU MISS SHAORIN'S LITTLE BROTHER OR SOMETHING?
HA HA HA. MISS SHAORIN, YOU'RE SO FUNNY.
AND EVEN CUTER THAN I THOUGHT
SO I DO LOOK TOO YOUNG FOR SHAO...
MASTER?
LITTLE BROTHER
OH NO, HE IS MY MASTER.

"MASTER"?
HUH?
MASTER TASUKE, I AM GOING TO LOOK AROUND, ALL RIGHT?
WHAT?! WAIT A MINUTE, SHAO!
I'LL COME WITH YOU!
THEN STAY WHERE I CAN SEE YOU!
I WILL BE ALL RIGHT BY MYSELF
YES
I DON'T KNOW WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP YOU TWO HAVE, BUT CALLING YOU MASTER? COME ON.
EVEN I'M EMBARRASSED FOR YOU
DOES IT TURN YOU ON, BEING CALLED MASTER?
UH...UHH.
ARE YOU SOME KIND OF PERVERT?
HIS ATTITUDE SURE CHANGED WHEN SHAO LEFT.

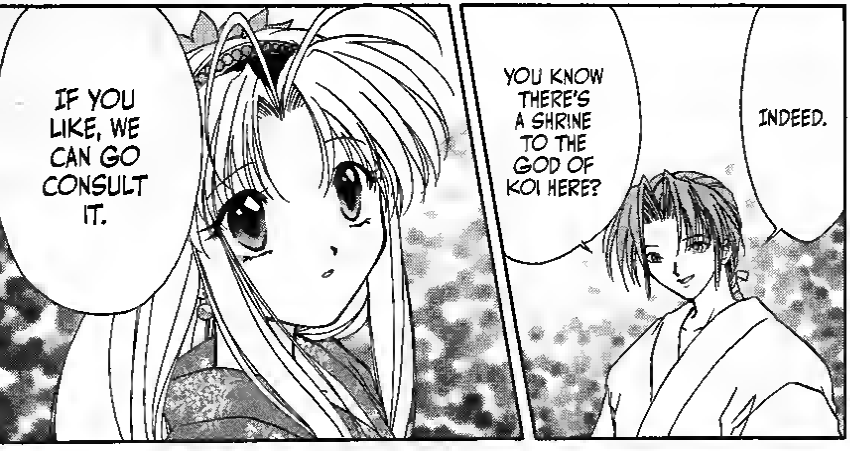


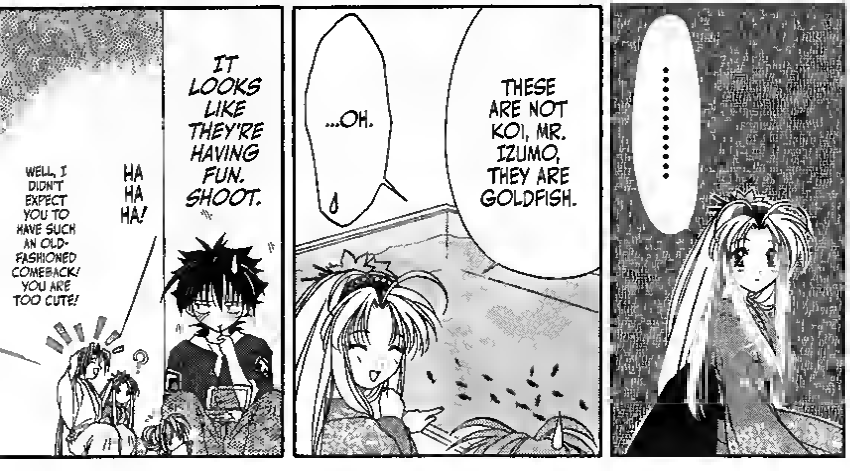
*TAKOYAKI ARE GRILLED PANCAKE BALLS WITH A PIECE OF OCTOPUS IN THE MIDDLE.

RAI RAI, RISHU!
OH.
ONE MORE THING BEFORE WE GO.
?
HOSHIGAMI: RISHU
GOD OF THE CONSTELLATION AQUILA, THE EAGLE. SHAO'S MESSENGER WHO CAN SEND HER TELEPATHIC MESSAGES WHEN THEY ARE APART.]
RISHU'S SASH READS: SPIRIT OF COMMUNICATION
SHAO...
HEY! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?!
IT'S A SECRET!
WHAT...?
IF SOMETHING HAPPENS, SHE WILL LET ME KNOW.

SNAP OUT OF IT!
THIS IS NO TIME TO POUT!!
ショック
SHAO LEFT ME BEHIND.
SHAO LEFT ME BEHIND.
SHAO LEFT ME BEHIND.
SHAO LEFT ME BEHIND.
SHAO LEFT ME BEHIND.
THAT TWO-FACED JERK...
...BETTER NOT LAY A HAND ON HER, OR HE'LL BE SORRY!!

EMPTY THREATS. WHAT AM I GOING TO DO, SPY ON HIM TO DEATH?
HOW PATHETIC
WOW! MR. IZUMO, YOU ARE REALLY GOOD AT SCOOPING GOLDFISH.
GOLDFISH SCOOPING IS ONE OF MY MANY TALENTS.
OH, IT IS?


INDEED.
YOU KNOW THERE'S A SHRINE TO THE GOD OF KOI HERE?
IF YOU LIKE, WE CAN GO CONSULT IT.

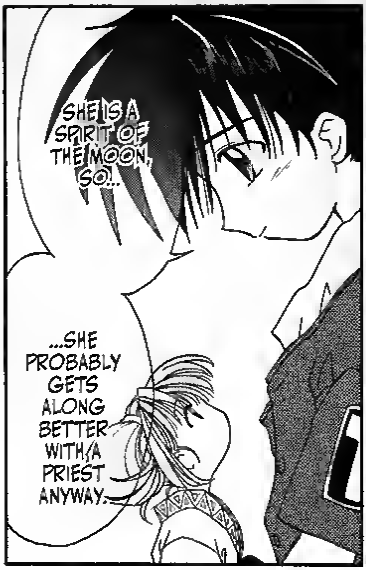

.....
THESE ARE NOT KOI, MR. IZUMO, THEY ARE GOLDFISH.
...OH.
IT LOOKS LIKE THEY'RE HAVING FUN. SHOOT.
HA HA HA!
WELL, I DIDN'T EXPECT YOU TO HAVE SUCH AN OLD-FASHIONED COMEBACK! YOU ARE TOO CUTE!

IZUMO
WHOA!!
HMM? WHAT'S UP?
KYAH!!
POP
HA HA!
IT'S EASY TO TRIP AROUND HERE
WELL, SHOULD WE GET GOING?
YES.
TAKE THAT! AND THAT!!
POW POW POW
ICE
HEY! WHERE ARE THEY GOING?!
GRRRR!
WE PROBABLY SHOULDN'T BE DOING THIS...
BESIDES, WHAT GOOD WILL IT DO?

OH!
TRIP
I'VE GOT YOU.
!!
I JUST TOLD YOU TO WATCH YOUR STEP. YOU'RE JUST SO CUTE
I AM SORRY. THANK YOU
BLECH, GROSS!

AREN'T THEY A CUTE COUPLE?
AW, ARE YOU JEALOUS, TASUKE?
I...
SO SHE DUMPED YOU AFTER ALL?
POOR GUY...
YOU REALLY HAVE TO BE CAREFUL OUT HERE, BUT DON'T WORRY, I WON'T LEAVE YOU.
YES.
WHOA!
SHOUKO, WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?!
I CAME TO SEE THE FESTIVAL, DUMMY.
CHILL OUT.
BUT HE IS A PRETTY GOOD-LOOKING GUY.
I CAN SEE WHY SHAO CHOSE HIM OVER YOU.
MIGHT AS WELL GIVE UP.
DON'T YOU LISTEN?
AAAAW!
I JUST LOVE CUTE COUPLES!
I SHOULDN'T STARE.
SHE DIDN'T DUMP ME--WE WEREN'T GOING OUT.
WE AREN'T LIKE THAT.

A BORING GUY LIKE YOU NEVER HAD A CHANCE WITH SHAO ANYWAY.
ALL RIGHT, ALREADY.
WOW.
SO THIS IS COTTON CANDY?
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT COTTON CANDY IS? HOW CUTE.
I'M JUST MAKING MYSELF FEEL WORSE BY SPYING ON THEM.
WELL, IT SHOULD BE.
IT IS SO FLUFFY!
.....
SHE DOESN'T EVEN TRY TO MAKE ME FEEL BETTER.
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
OOPS. I DON'T HAVE TIME TO TALK TO YOU.
SEE YA!
SIGH...
I'LL GO BACK.
WHERE SHOULD WE GO NEXT?
OH, UMM...


SHE IS A SPIRIT OF THE MOON, SO...
...SHE PROBABLY GETS ALONG BETTER WITH A PRIEST ANYWAY.

I'M NOT A GOOD MATCH FOR SHAO.
I GET IT.

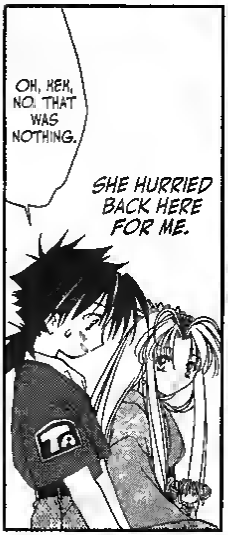
TO THINK THAT A BEAUTIFUL GIRL LIKE THAT WOULD BE WITH ME IN THE FIRST PLACE...
HMM. A LITTLE MORE SALT MAYBE?
MAYBE THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH ME.
IT'S OKAY, I'M USED TO BEING ALONE.

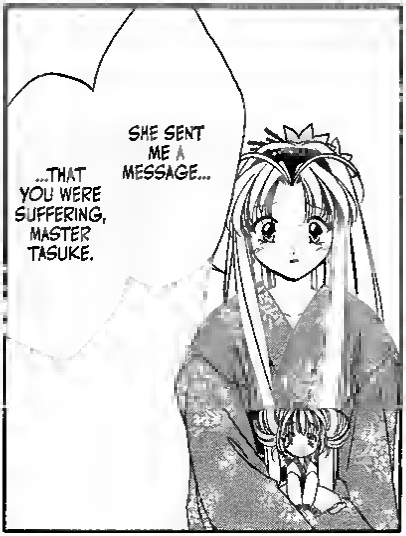
OH NO!!
HUH?
FROM THE STARS THAT LIGHT THE HEAVENS COME FORTH!
* SUZAKU IS A RED PHOENIX THAT SYMBOLIZES SOUTH & SUMMER. IT CORRESPONDS TO THE CONSTELLATIONS THAT MARK THE SEVEN POSITIONS OF THE MOON.
RAI RAI, KENEN!!
STARS OF SUZAKU* DO NOT WEARY OF MY SUMMONS.
THE GETTEN SPIRIT CALLS FOR YOUR RETURN!

HURRY, KENEN! MASTER TASUKE IS IN TROUBLE!!
.....
WHOA!
HOLD ON A MINUTE!
WOW!
MAMA, IT'S A DRAGON!
"THE EVENTS THIS YEAR ARE SO... FANCY."
WHAT THE--?!
WHO IN THE WORLD ARE YOU...?

I AM A SHUGO-GETTEN.
I CAME FROM OUT OF THE SHITENRIN...
...TO PROTECT MASTER TASUKE.
MASTER TASUKE...
...IS SUFFERING.
SOMETHING IS WRONG.
I MUST PROTECT HIM.

MASTER TASUKE!!
I STILL DON'T GET IT.
SHAO...
.....


OH, HEH, NO. THAT WAS NOTHING.
SHE HURRIED BACK HERE FOR ME.


SHE SENT ME A MESSAGE...
...THAT YOU WERE SUFFERING, MASTER TASUKE.

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, MASTER TASUKE?
WHAT?

YOU WERE GONE SO LONG THAT...
...I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN LOST OR SOMETHING. I WAS A LITTLE WORRIED IS ALL.
OH.
HOW SWEET.
THAT IS NOT ALL
MR. IZUMO WON US SOME GOLDFISH.
I THOUGHT THEY COULD LIVE IN THE AQUARIUM AT HOME.
I WANTED TO SURPRISE YOU, MASTER TASUKE.
SO I ASKED MR. IZUMO.
OH, THAT'S WHY SHE LEFT ME BEHIND.
I AM SORRY I MADE YOU WORRY.
OH NO, THAT'S OKAY.
YOU HAD GOOD INTENTIONS.

WELL...
THERE WAS A FISH-- ONCE.
I HAVE WONDERED ABOUT IT FOR A WHILE.
WHY AREN'T THERE ANY FISH IN THAT AQUARIUM?
WHEN MY DAD LIVED HERE, HE HAD A KOI...
...BUT AFTER HE LEFT...
WELL, FISH...
...IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S JUST YOU AND ME.
THE FISH GOT DEPRESSED
HE SEEMED TO JUST GIVE UP AND DIE.

AT THE TIME...
...I WAS REALLY HURT BY HIS DEATH.
I WONDERED WHY HE LEFT ME ALONE.
FOR YEARS, I THOUGHT HE LEFT ME ON PURPOSE.
I COULDN'T JUST BUY ANOTHER FISH.
BUYING A REPLACEMENT SEEMED POINTLESS.

...AND I...
...THE HOSHIGAMI, THESE FISHIES...
FROM NOW ON...
DO NOT BE SAD ...
...MASTER TASUKE...
...WILL ALWAYS BE HERE FOR YOU.
SO PLEASE DO NOT MAKE SUCH A SAD FACE.

I AM A SHUGO-GETTEN.
EVEN THOUGH WE MAY BE PARTED AT TIMES...
...JUST AS THE MOON ALWAYS RETURNS TO THE NIGHT SKY..
...I WILL ALWAYS...
...RETURN TO YOU!

UMM ...
WE MIGHT NOT BE AS GREAT AS YOUR FATHER, BUT...
UMM...WELL...
THAT'S NOT TRUE.
THANK YOU, SHAO.
MISS SHAORIN.
HEY!!
WHY'S HE STILL HERE?!
YES?
YOU ARE THE MOST COMPASSIONATE WOMAN I HAVE EVER MET.
ARGH

IT LOOKS LIKE...
...I'LL NEED TO CONSULT THE SHRINE OF THE GOD OF KOI.
RATHER PATHETIC FOR A PRIEST, HUH?
BUT BEFORE I GO...
ARE YOU FREE THIS SUNDAY, MISS SHAORIN?
.....
MASTER TASUKE, HE SAID THIS SUNDAY. ARE WE FREE?
MISS SHAORIN!
I'M NOT ASKING HIM.
WE'RE NOT FREE! WE'RE TOTALLY BUSY!!
THAT TWO-FACED
?
THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT!

CHAPTER 6
I WON'T LET ANYONE
HAVE SHAO!!

SIGH...
IT'S AUTUMN.
THE SEASON OF LOVE.
.....
THAT STUPID IZUMO MIYAUCHI.
HE HANGS AROUND HERE EVERY SUNDAY.
I HAVE TO DO SOMETHING BEFORE THIS WEEKEND!
I JUST HAPPENED TO BE PASSING BY.
LAST WEEK, SHAO RAN INTO HIM AND INVITED HIM IN.
DON'T YOU!!
MASTER TASUKE!
PEEK
KYAH!!

WHAT IS THIS?
I FOUND IT IN THE CLOSET
OH, THAT'S...
...THE TENNIS RACQUET AND BALL THAT MY DAD BOUGHT...
FOR NO REASON
THAT'S IT!! I'LL TAKE SHAO TO PLAY TENNIS AND THEN HE WON'T FIND US!
YAY, TENNIS! ♡
SHAO! SHHH!!
MASTER TASUKE, WHAT IS TENNIS?
MASTER TASUKE, WHY ARE WE LEAVING THROUGH THE BACK DOOR?
ARE THERE ENEMIES IN FRONT?
WHAT?! NO...JUST BECAUSE...
I JUST FELT LIKE IT
そそそそそ
PERFECT !!
OKAY, IF WE RUN HE WON'T CATCH US.

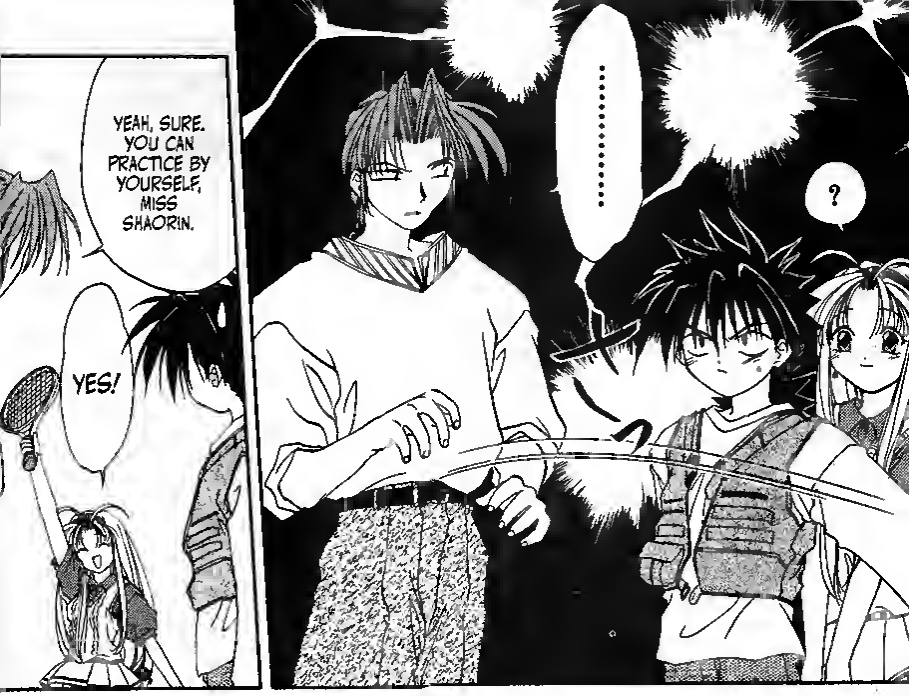
MASTER TASUKE!
YOU ARE SUPPOSED TO HIT THE BALL WITH THIS RACQUET OBJECT, RIGHT?!
YEP, YEP!
I DON'T REALLY KNOW HOW TO PLAY EITHER
THIS IS ACTUALLY THE FIRST TIME WE'VE GONE OUT TOGETHER.
ぽこーん
A NICE DAY PLAYING TENNIS WITH SHAO...
TENNIS ON OUR FIRST DATE...
ぽーん
...HUH? WHERE'D THE BALL GO?
きょろ
きょろ

ドオオ
……？
I-
I-I-I-I...
HM?
!!

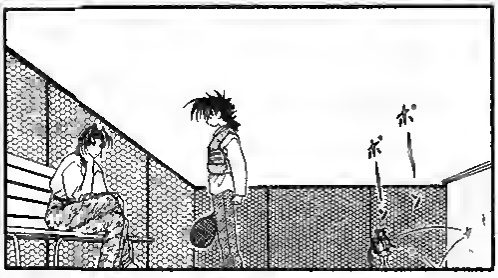
HOW'D HE KNOW WE WERE HERE?
I THOUGHT WE LOST HIM!
IZUMO MIYAUCHI?!
HELLO!
I'M SO STUPID.
I FOUND A TENNIS BALL BEHIND YOUR HOUSE, SO I THOUGHT I MIGHT SEE IF YOU WERE HERE AND BRING IT TO YOU.
YOU MUST TAKE CARE OF YOUR POSSESSIONS OR THE GODS WILL BE ANGRY WITH YOU.
MISS SHAORIN.
PLEASE LEAVE IT TO ME.
THAT WOULD BE A GREAT HELP. IT'S MY FIRST TIME SO I DON'T REALLY KNOW ANYTHING.
IF YOU WOULD LIKE, I CAN TEACH YOU HOW TO PLAY.
I'M PRETTY GOOD AT TENNIS.
THAT'S A BACKHAND.
YEP
ME TOO?
UGH. HIM TOO?
WHAT?
WE WILL DO OUR BEST, RIGHT, MASTER TASUKE? ♡

HEY! HOW DARE YOU HOLD HER HAND!
FIRST, YOU HAVE TO GET A GOOD GRIP ON THE RACQUET.
GET YOUR HANDS OFF OF HER!!
YOU CREEP!
THEN YOU WANT TO SWING FROM THE HIPS
HE'S EVEN TOUCHING HER L-LEGS!!
YOU WANT TO PLACE YOUR FEET APART, LIKE THIS
すぉぉ
ALL RIGHT, I'LL START WITH MISS SHAORIN.
OH... ALL RIGHT.

HEY, TEACH...
UGH. HE GIVES ME THE CREEPS.
WHY DON'T YOU GIVE ME MY LESSON NOW?!


YEAH, SURE. YOU CAN PRACTICE BY YOURSELF, MISS SHAORIN.
YES!
.....
?

.....
IS THIS A GOOD GRIP?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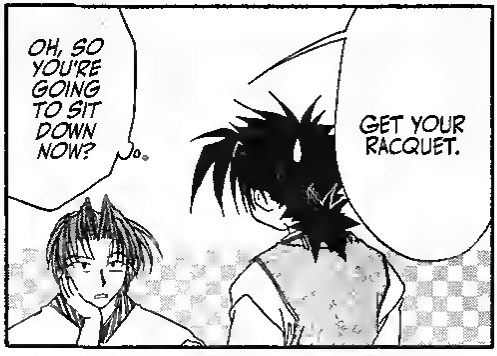

OH, SO YOU'RE GOING TO SIT DOWN NOW?
GET YOUR RACQUET.

NEXT, TRY TAKING A SWING.
ARE YOU SURE?!
YEAH, WHATEVER. THAT'S FINE.
AH HA HA HA! YOU LOOK STUPID!
BUT WHATEVER. THAT'S FINE.
OH, I SEE.
YOU HAVE NO COORDINATION, DO YOU?
I'VE NEVER MET ANYONE THIS BAD.

I'M NOT SO BAD THAT YOU HAVE TO MAKE FUN OF ME.
NOT THAT I'M SUPER ATHLETIC...
HOW ABOUT A MATCH THEN?
THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN TELL THAT JUST FROM MY SWING!!
SO MUCH SO THAT I DO HAVE TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT IT.
YES, BUT YOU ARE OVER CONFIDENT.
AND LET'S BET ON IT...
TASUKE
...A MATCH?
はっ。
UH, UM...

ALL I NEED IS ONE DAY...
...TO MAKE HER MINE.
IF I WIN, I GET TO GO ON A DATE WITH SHAO.
.....
AND IF I WIN...
...WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
HA!
THEN I WILL GIVE UP PURSUING SHAO.
I WILL MAKE A VOW TO THE GODS NEVER TO BOTHER YOU AGAIN.
DEAL!!
I ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE!
YOU BETTER NOT BE LYING!
OH?

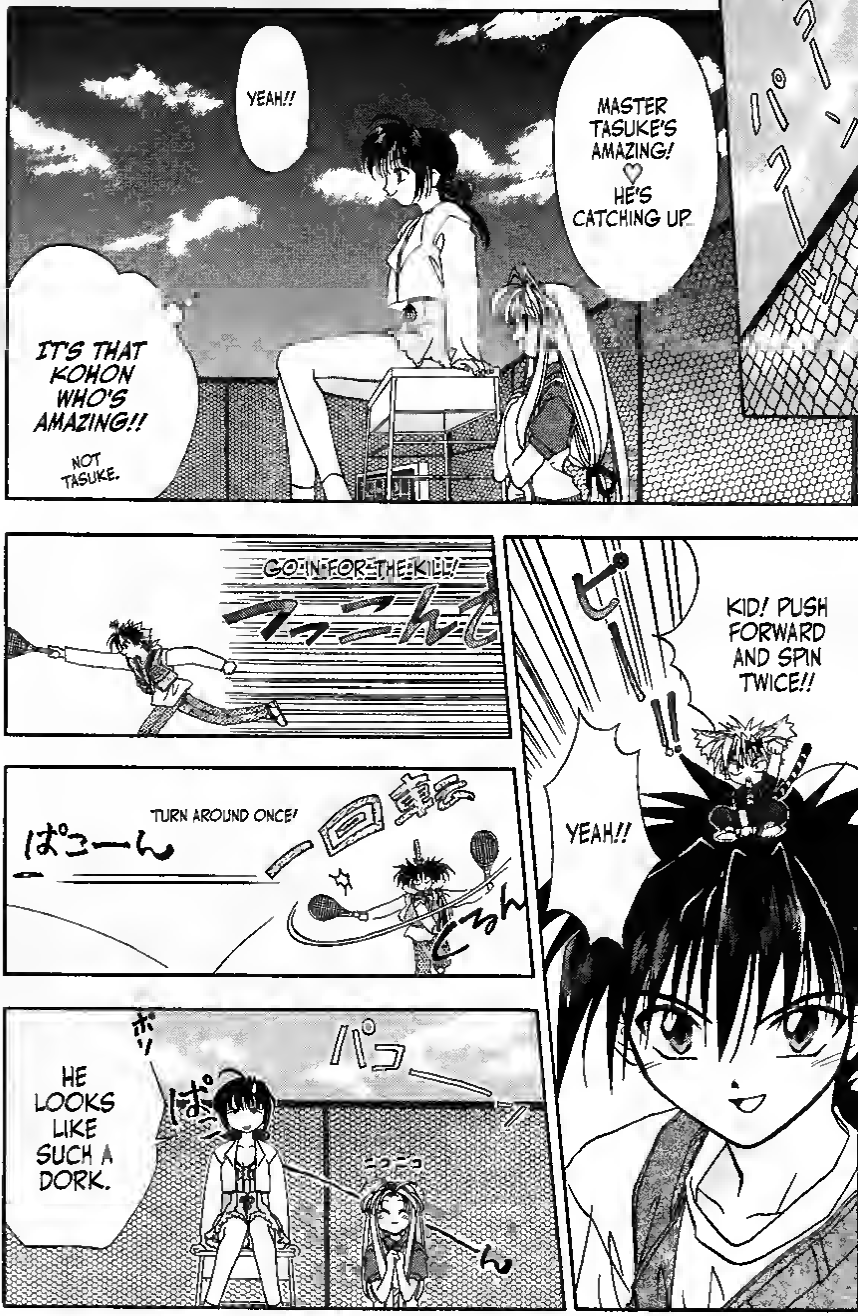
LOOKS LIKE YOU GUYS ARE HAVING FUN.
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
SHO-UKO!
YOU AGAIN?!
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
MISS SHOUKO
DON'T EVEN THINK ABOUT TRYING TO IGNORE ME.
I'LL JUDGE YOUR TENNIS MATCH FOR YOU. LET'S GET IT STARTED!
HOW THOUGHTFUL OF YOU, MISS. YOU CAN WATCH TASUKE LOSE.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
TASUKE SHICHIRI VERSUS IZUMO MIYAUCHI! FIVE SET MATCH!
LET THE GAME BEGIN!!

30 MINUTES...
..LATER.
YOU'RE TOO WEAK.
IN
TS
6 6 4
0 0 0
SHUT UP!!
HE'S RIGHT, TASUKE. IF YOU LOSE TWO MORE SETS, IT'S OVER.
WHAT A BORING MATCH.
AAAAAHHH!
MA-
MASTER TASUKE?!
THERE IS AN OLD RULE IN TENNIS THAT WHOEVER LOSES WILL BE THROWN INTO THE BOTTOMLESS VALLEY.*
SHAO, THIS IS TERRIBLE! TASUKE IS GOING TO BE IN TROUBLE IF HE DOESN'T COME BACK!!
TROUBLE?
* THE VALLEY WHERE LIONS THROW THEIR CUBS SO THAT THEY MAY GROW UP STRONG AND INDEPENDENT.

KOHON! PLEASE HELP MASTER TASUKE!
.....
OKAY, KID, LISTEN UP.
HOSHIGAMI KOHON
GOD OF THE CONSTELLATION LEO, THE LION.
AN EXPERT IN ALL KINDS OF SPORTS AND THE ULTIMATE COACH.
HEY PRIESTY, YOU DON'T MIND IF HE GETS A LITTLE COACHING HELP, DO YOU?
I DON'T MIND. IT'D TAKE MORE THAN A LITTLE COACHING TO HELP HIM.
GO, KOHON!!
GOD, THIS GUY IS ANNOYING.
I CAN'T LET THAT HAPPEN.
IF I WIN, I GET TO GO ON A DATE WITH SHAO.
"ALL I NEED IS ONE DAY TO MAKE HER MINE."
I CAN'T LOSE
IT'S NOT EXACTLY IMPRESSIVE TO HAVE THE HOSHIGAMI HELP ME, BUT I GUESS IT'S BETTER THAN GOING DOWN LIKE THIS.
AH, TENNIS MY OLD FRIEND.

Y-YES?!
KID!!
O...KAY.
THREE STEPS TO THE LEFT!!
SERIOUSLY? JUST SWING WILDLY?
NOW SWING WILDLY!!

LIKE THIS?
HUH?
IT WORKED!!


パコーン
パコーン
MASTER TASUKE'S AMAZING! ♡ HE'S CATCHING UP.
YEAH!!
IT'S THAT KOHON WHO'S AMAZING!!
NOT TASUKE.
GO IN FOR THE KILL!
ぴー!!
KID! PUSH FORWARD AND SPIN TWICE!!
YEAH!!
TURN AROUND ONCE!
ぱこーん
一回転
ころん
ボリ
HE LOOKS LIKE SUCH A DORK.
ぱこーん
パコーン
ニコニコ
ん

I.M 6 6 4 4 5
T.S 0 0 6 6 4
40-30, MATCH POINT MIYAUCHI!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I CAUGHT UP, NOW I JUST HAVE TO FINISH THIS SET.
I JUST NEED TO GET THAT LAST POINT, NO MATTER WHAT.
THE HOSHIGAMI IS A PRETTY GOOD COACH, BUT TASUKE IS GETTING TIRED OUT.
HE'LL GIVE UP!!
SHAO IS MINE!!
...AT THIS RATE...
BUT...

AS FOR THE REST...
...I'M GOING TO DO IT MYSELF!!
THANK YOU, KOHON, YOU HELPED ME A LOT.
OH? YOU'VE GOT A LOT OF CONFIDENCE, KID!!
ACTUALLY, I DON'T HAVE MUCH CONFIDENCE AT ALL.
BUT AT LEAST I'LL KNOW THAT I DID IT MYSELF.

I'LL FINISH THIS!
PLEASE WAIT!
WHAT?!

MASTER TASUKE...
...IF YOU WANT TO DO IT BY YOURSELF, THEN...
...I CANNOT FORCE YOU TO ACCEPT MY HELP.
BUT...
...MASTER TASUKE...
...IF YOU LOSE...
...I...
...I DO NOT KNOW WHAT I WILL DO!!

SHAO...
SO THAT'S WHY SHE SUMMONED KOHON.
I GET IT NOW.
I UNDERSTAND, SHAO. WE FEEL THE SAME WAY.
I WILL NOT LOSE!!
SHE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT SHE'LL DO IF I LOSE AND SHE HAS TO GO OUT ON A DATE WITH IZUMO.
SO SHAO DOESN'T WANT TO DATE ANYONE BUT ME EITHER!

AFTER HEARING YOU SAY ALL THAT, I CAN'T LOSE!
IT'S ALL RIGHT, SHAO.
I'LL WIN THIS FOR SURE!!
YAY!
PLEASE DO YOUR BEST!

HAH.
MY, AREN'T YOU A SHOW-OFF...
...TA-SUKE.
DO YOU REALLY THINK YOU CAN WIN...
...WITHOUT THE HOSHIGAMI'S HELP?
YOU ARE SUCH A FOOL!
I...

I WOULD LIKE...
...TO PROTECT YOU FROM THE ISOLATION AND LONELINESS IN YOUR SOUL.
UNTIL NOW SHAO HAS PROTECTED AND WORRIED ABOUT ME.
I'M SO...
...PATHETIC.
JUST THIS ONCE...
...I MUST PROTECT SHAO!!
HE'S GETTING ALL FIRED UP.
THAT SO DOESN'T FIT HIM.

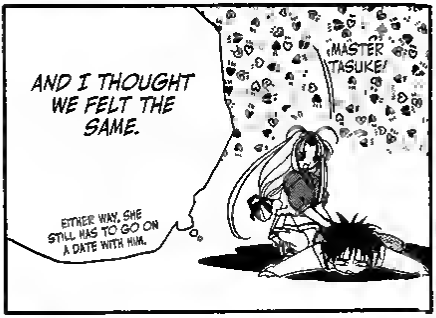
I WON'T LET YOU HAVE SHAO!!
SPLIT PERSONALITY PRIEST!!

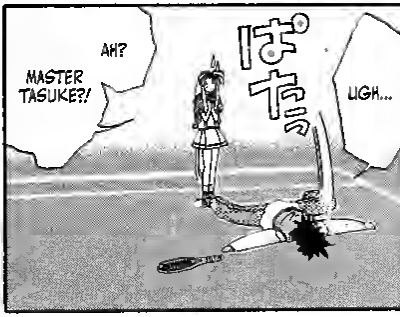
...UH.
I LOST.
MASTER TASUKE.
I SHALL ACCOMPANY YOU TO THE BOTTOMLESS VALLEY.
.....
..HUH?

WAIT A MINUTE? THAT MEANS...
...THAT WHEN SHE SAID SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT SHE'D DO, SHE REALLY MEANT SHE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT SHE'D DO IF I WERE THROWN INTO THE BOTTOMLESS VALLEY?

HEY!!
SHOUKO, NOT YOU AGAIN!
YOU LIED TO SHAO, DIDN'T YOU?
I WILL NOT LET YOU BE ALONE MASTER TASUKE!!

SINCE YOU LOST THE TENNIS MATCH, IT CANNOT BE HELPED.
THE BOTTOMLESS..
..VALLEY?
WHAT'S THAT?


AND I THOUGHT WE FELT THE SAME.
MASTER TASUKE!
EITHER WAY, SHE STILL HAS TO GO ON A DATE WITH HIM.


AH?
MASTER TASUKE?!
ぽて
UGH...

THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
"POPOCORN" IS IT?
MISS SHAORIN, YOU REALLY ARE SO FUNNY!
HA HA HA HA.

HERE, MR. IZUMO, IT IS CALLED POPOCORN!!

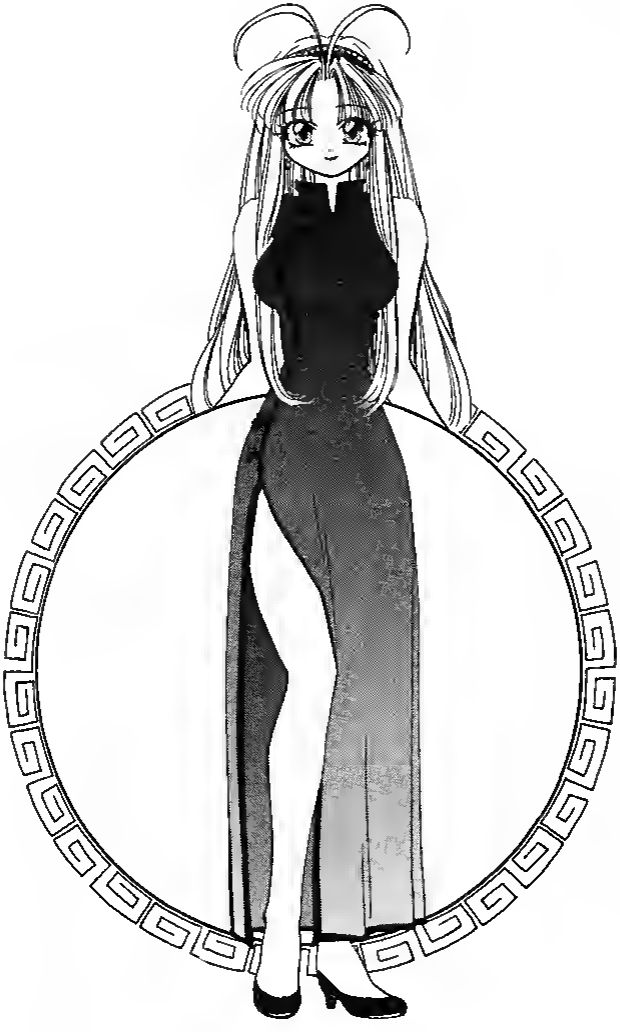
SHAO

IT'S POPCORN.
IT'S NOT CALLED "POPOCORN."
YOU SAID A DATE, BUT YOU DIDN'T SPECIFY JUST THE TWO OF YOU NOW, DID YOU?
WHAT ABOUT OUR BET?
AND MY DATE?
WHISPER
SHAO ASKED ME TO COME. I COULDN'T SAY NO, COULD I?
GRUMBLE
WHY ARE YOU HERE?
POPCORN
THE PEOPLE IN THE BOX ARE ENORMOUS!!
MASTER TASUKE!
WHATEVER SHALL WE DO?
WHISPER
EVEN IF THE GODS DON'T LIKE IT, I HAVE SHAO, SO I DON'T CARE.
MUMBLE
YOU KNOW, TASUKE, THAT SOUNDS LIKE A LOAD OF CRAP.
THE GODS DON'T LOOK HIGHLY ON IT!

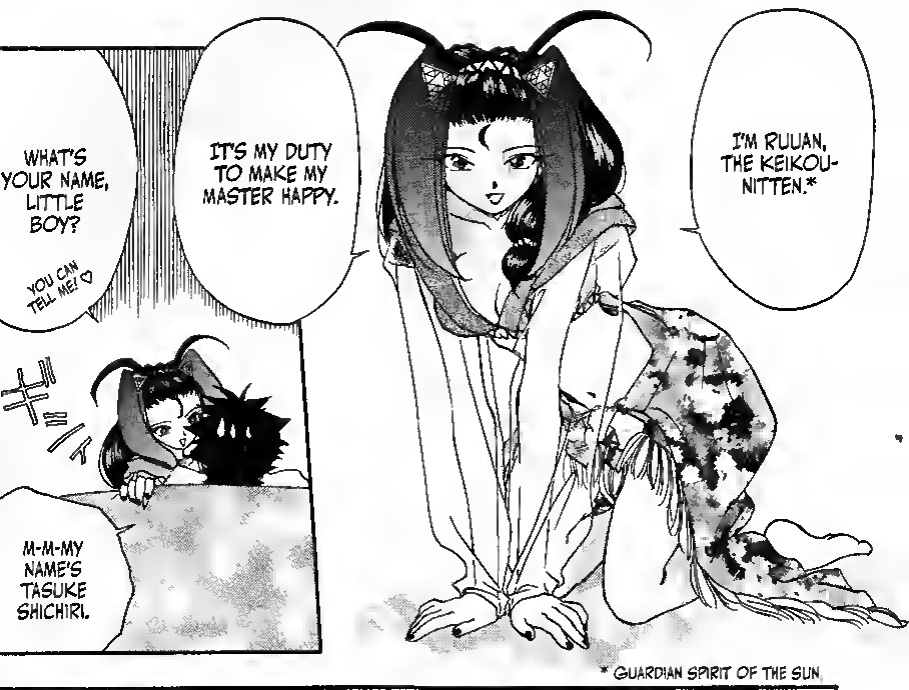
MASTER TASUKE.
A PACKAGE HAS COME FROM YOUR FATHER!
WHAT IS IT?
"HELLO, TASUKE!"
SO HE'S STILL WANDERING AROUND CHINA.
"I FOUND ANOTHER INTERESTING RELIC CALLED A KOKUTENTOU AT AN ANTIQUE STORE SO I'M SENDING IT ALONG TO YOU."
"LIKE THE SHITENRIN, IF A PERSON WITH A PURE HEART LOOKS INTO IT, HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO SEE SOMETHING."
"OF COURSE, YOUR OLD PAPPY COULDN'T SEE ANYTHING IN THIS ONE EITHER."
YEAH, I BET.
MASTER TASUKE! THAT PIPE IS--
モワン
.....
THE SUN?
モワーン
RIIIGHT, LIKE TWO OF THESE THINGS EXIST, AND HE HAPPENED TO FIND THEM BOTH.
OH...

HI!

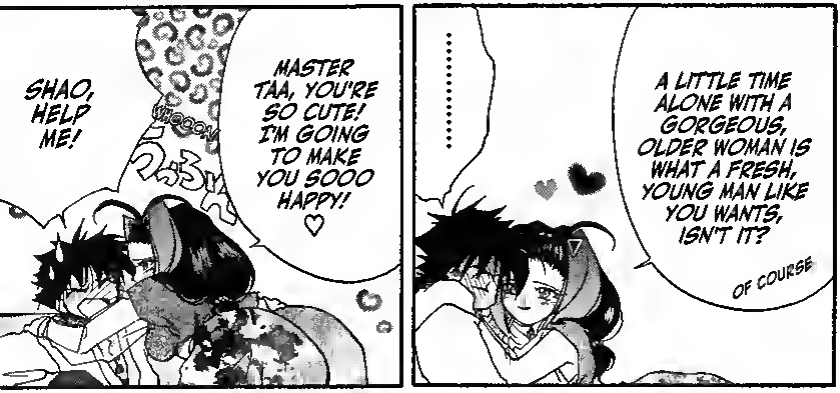
CHAPTER 7
KEIKOUNITTEN RUUAN ARRIVES!!
DID YOU CALL ME?



OH NO, NOT AGAIN. ANOTHER ONE, DAD?
SO YOU'RE MY NEW MASTER?
AWW, YOU'RE JUST A LITTLE BOY, AREN'T YA?
HOW CUUUTE! ♡


I'M RUUAN, THE KEIKOU-NITTEN.*
IT'S MY DUTY TO MAKE MY MASTER HAPPY.
WHAT'S YOUR NAME, LITTLE BOY?
YOU CAN TELL ME! ♡
M-M-MY NAME'S TASUKE SHICHIRI.

* GUARDIAN SPIRIT OF THE SUN.


SHAO, HELP ME!
MASTER TAA, YOU'RE SO CUTE! I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU SOOO HAPPY! ♡
.....
A LITTLE TIME ALONE WITH A GORGEOUS, OLDER WOMAN IS WHAT A FRESH, YOUNG MAN LIKE YOU WANTS, ISN'T IT?
OF COURSE

DID YOU SAY... SHAO?
...SHAO?
OH, MISS RUUAN, IT HAS BEEN A LONG TIME!
.....
UNGH, SHAO...
I AM SO HAPPY WE MEET AGAIN!
SH-SH-SHUGO-GETTEN SHAORIN!!

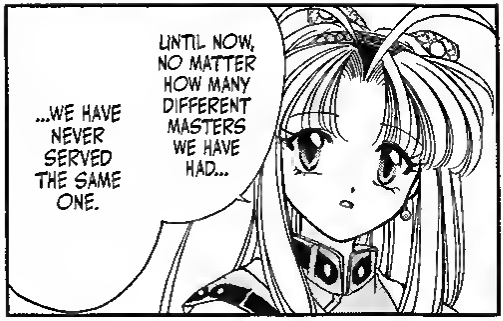
AT LAST! AFTER 1,012 YEARS I WILL FINALLY GET TO SETTLE THIS THING!
HUH?
MISS RUUAN, PLEASE WAIT!
SO, YOU STAND IN MY WAY.
THOSE WHO OBEY THE HEAVENS PREVAIL. THOSE WHO DEFY THE HEAVENS PERISH.
THAT WHICH DOES NOT HAVE A WILL, AWAKEN BY MY POWER.

YOUTENSHIN SHOURA!!
ガタガタ
ガタガタ
GRAR!
MISS RUUAN HAS THE POWER TO GIVE INANIMATE OBJECTS LIFE.
TOOM
WAIT A MINUTE?!
UNGH!!
IT'S UGLY!
LADY, I DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT, SO JUST CALM DOWN AND WE'LL TALK IT OVER.
WOOOO..
SO YOU'RE GONNA GET MASTER TAA INVOLVED IN THIS TOO, ARE YA?
SHAORIN! GET AWAY FROM MASTER TAA!!

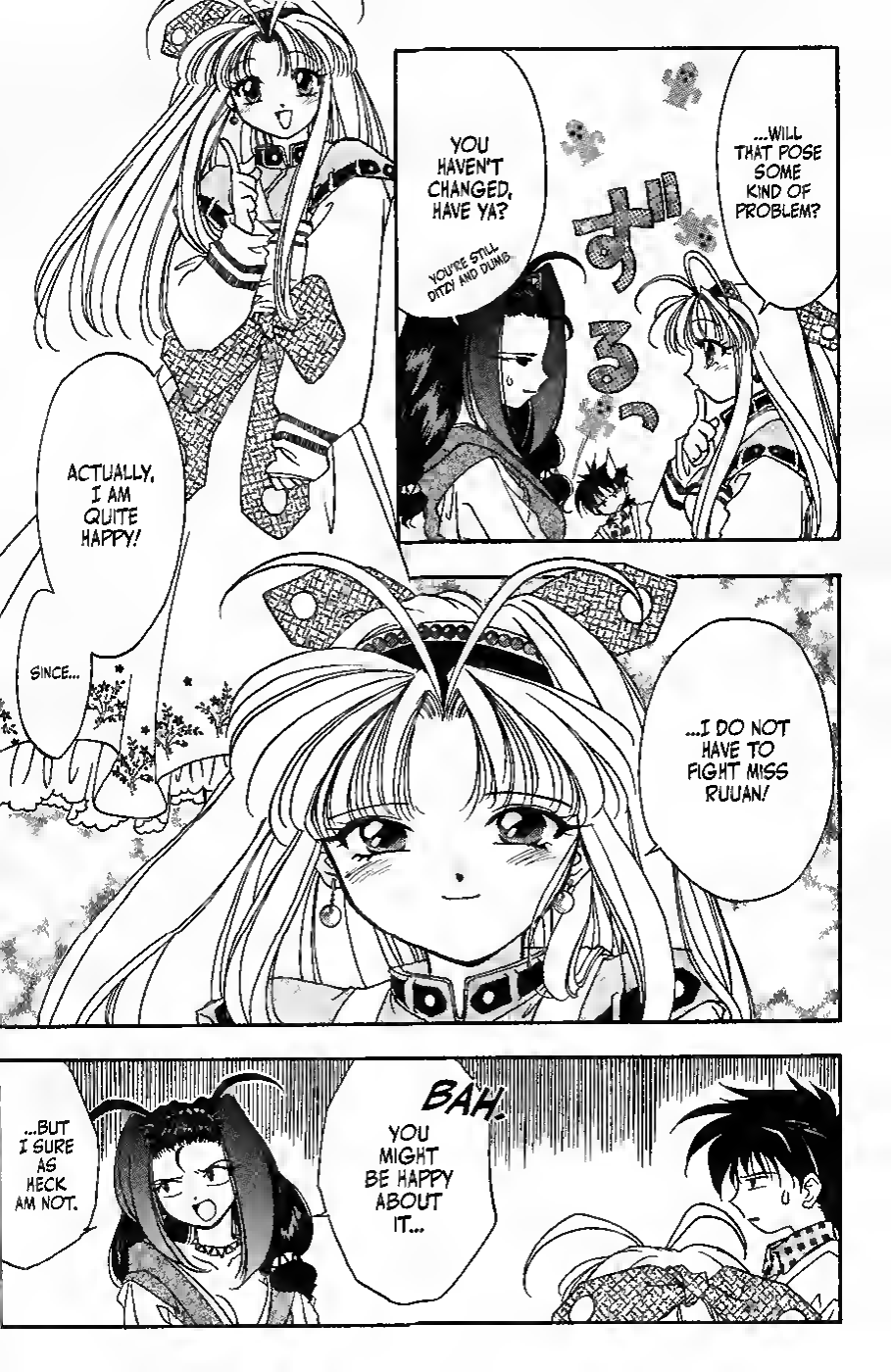
SO YOU MEAN...
...YOU ARE THE ONE-AND-ONLY MASTER OF BOTH THE NITTEN AND GETTEN?
UM...I GUESS...
WHAT A PREDIC-AMENT.
PREDIC-AMENT?
MASTER TASUKE... UMM...
A SHUGOGETTEN IS A SPIRIT OF THE MOON WHO PROTECTS HER MASTER FROM MISFORTUNE.
A KEIKOUNITTEN IS A SPIRIT OF THE SUN WHO BRINGS HER MASTER GOOD FORTUNE.

WE HAVE BOTH DONE OUR BEST BY OUR MASTERS.
...WE ARE DOOMED TO BATTLE EACH OTHER BECAUSE OF THE CONFLICTING WILLS OF OUR MASTERS.
WHILE WE BOTH HAVE PURE HEARTS...

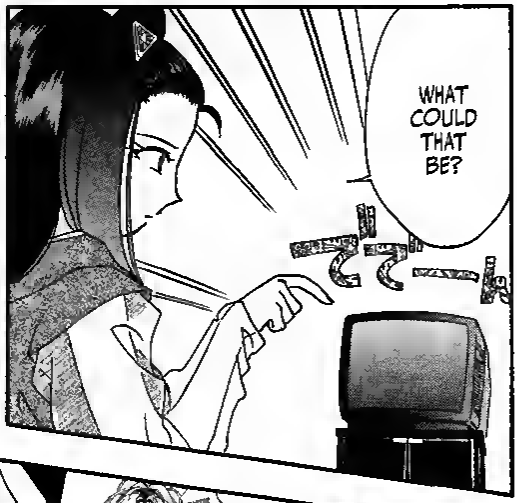
...WE ARE CALLED FORTH FROM THE SHITENRIN AND KOKUTENTOU.
BY ONE WITH A PURE HEART...


...WE HAVE NEVER SERVED THE SAME ONE.
UNTIL NOW, NO MATTER HOW MANY DIFFERENT MASTERS WE HAVE HAD...

YEAH?
IF WE BOTH SERVE THE SAME MASTER...


...WILL THAT POSE SOME KIND OF PROBLEM?
すぅ
YOU HAVEN'T CHANGED, HAVE YA?
YOU'RE STILL DITZY AND DUMB.
ACTUALLY, I AM QUITE HAPPY!
SINCE...
...I DO NOT HAVE TO FIGHT MISS RUUAN!
BAH.
YOU MIGHT BE HAPPY ABOUT IT...
...BUT I SURE AS HECK AM NOT.

BESIDES, WHEN YOU'RE AROUND...
...YOU STEAL ALL THE ATTENTION.
EVEN THE NITTEN ACKNOWLEDGES THAT YOUR DITZINESS IS UNPARALLELED
DON'T WORRY LADY, YOU'RE PLENTY NOTICEABLE.
YEP-YEP


WHAT COULD THAT BE?

WOW.

FLASHBACK
UGH! HERE WE GO AGAIN!
PLEASE DON'T BREAK IT.

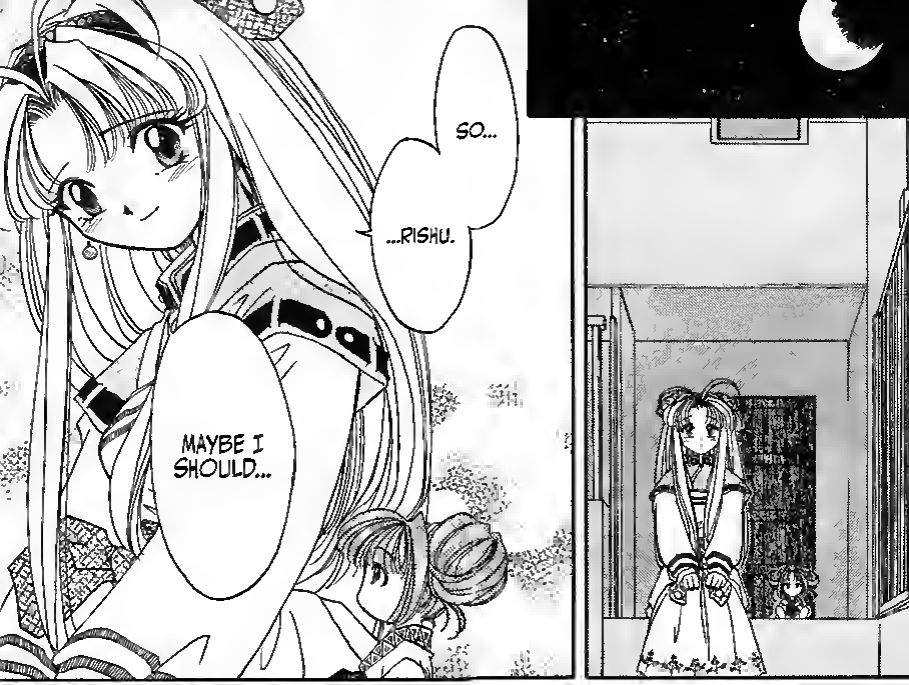
HMM... THIS MUST BE...
...A MACHINE FOR TRANSMITTING INFORMATION THROUGH SOUNDS AND IMAGES, MAYBE?
.....
THAT'S WHAT I'M THINKING.
SANDY!! WOOF!
パチッ
SHAORIN, DON'T YA HAVE ANYTHING TO EAT AROUND HERE?
YES!
YOU KNOW, LADY, THIS IS MY HOUSE.
OH, TIMES HAVE CHANGED A LOT, HAVEN'T THEY?
MISS RUUAN, WOULD YOU LIKE SOME NIKKUMAN?
THAT'S FINE. PUT THEM OVER THERE.
I WANT TO EAT SOME NIKKUMAN.
SHE SEEMS A BIT MORE NORMAL THAN SHAO.

HMM. THIS IS A PRETTY PEACEFUL PLACE, ISN'T IT?
THERE'S REALLY NO NEED FOR TWO SPIRITS, IS THERE?
.....?
MWA HA HA! I'VE GOT AN IDEA!
もも
YEEEES. IT'S DETAILED. IT'S PERFECT!
LADY, ARE YOU GONNA EAT OR LET IT GET COLD?

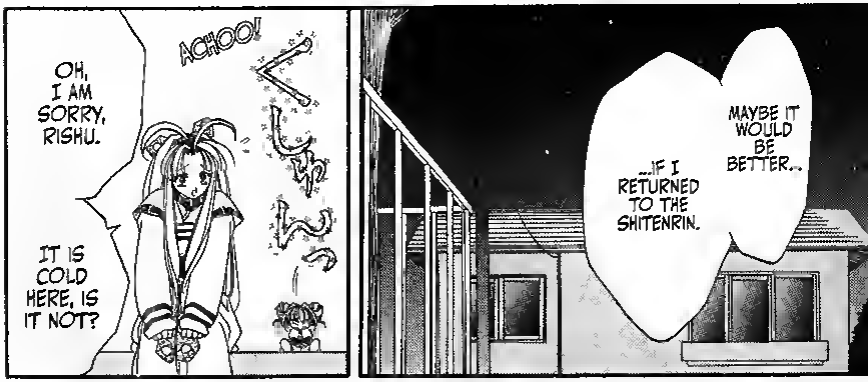
AWWW, SHAORIN, DON'T YOU LOOK SO PEACEFUL EATING YOUR NIKKUMAN?
I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU WANTED SOMETHING TO EAT.
OPERATION: KICK SHAORIN OUT!!
THERE DON'T SEEM TO BE ANY WARS HERE OR ASSASSINS...
...TO ENDANGER MASTER TAA.
WELL, IT'S FITTING THAT THE DITZ IS BLISSFUL.
SO THEN THERE IS REALLY NO REASON...
...FOR YOU TO BE HERE, SHAORIN.

IF YOU STICK AROUND...
YOU'LL ONLY BE IN THE WAY.
.....!
I, A KEIKOUNITTEN, CAN GRANT MASTER ALL VARIETIES OF HAPPINESS.
HOLD ON, RUUAN!
...THERE IS NOTHING FOR A SHUGOGETTEN TO PROTECT HIM FROM.
BUT AS LONG AS HE DOESN'T SUFFER FROM ANY MISFORTUNE...
ゴキュ

SHAO...
.....
NOW, MY MASTER! RUUAN WILL MAKE YOU VERY HAPPY!
WHERE'S YOUR BEDROOM? ♡
SHAOOOO!!
WHOA!
WHAT A WIMP!
THAT OUGHT TO BE ENOUGH TO MAKE SUPER HONEST SHAORIN RUN AWAY.
I WIN!!!
LET GO!


SO...
...RISHU.
MAYBE I SHOULD...

PANT PANT
TH-THAT WAS CLOSE!
SHE'S NOT NORMAL AT ALL!
TASUKU'S ROOM
C'MON, MASTER TAA, I SAID OPEN UP!!

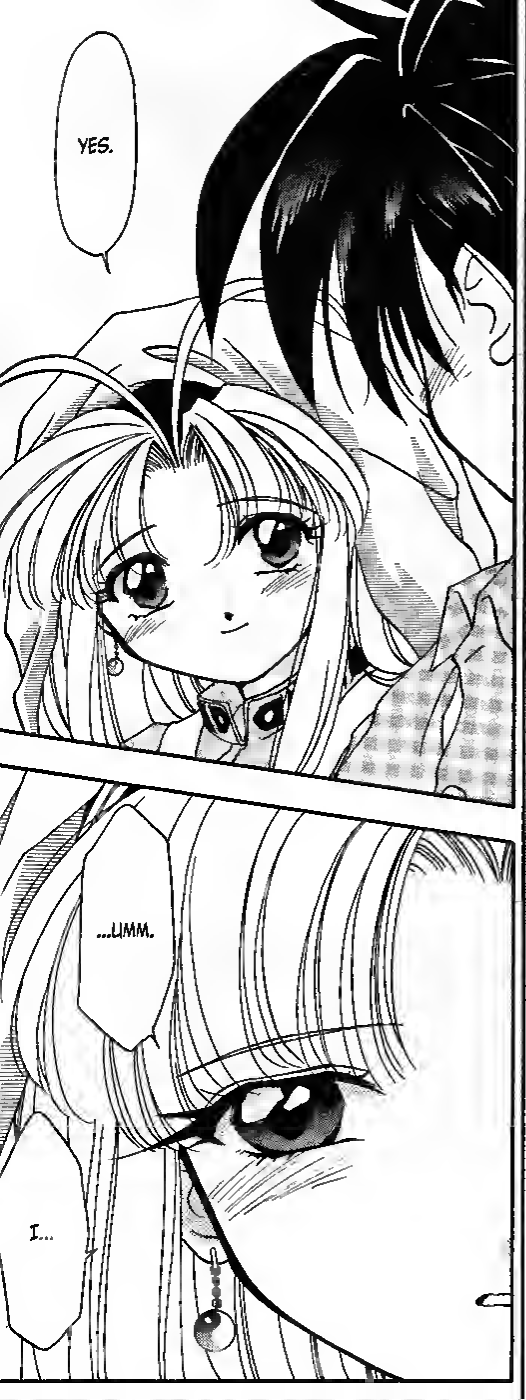

ACHOO!
OH, I AM SORRY, RISHU.
IT IS COLD HERE, IS IT NOT?
MAYBE IT WOULD BE BETTER...
...IF I RETURNED TO THE SHITENRIN.

YOU DO NOT MIND...
...IF I STAY HERE...
...JUST A LITTLE LONGER...
...DO YOU?
.....
IT WAS SO EASY TO SAY IT BEFORE...
"I WILL RETURN TO THE SHITENRIN."
"MAYBE I WILL MEET ANOTHER PERSON WITH A PURE HEART SOMEDAY."
I BELIEVED IT SO READILY...
...AND HURRIED BACK INTO THE SHITENRIN.
THOUGH I ENDED UP COMING BACK OUT

YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT THAT AGAIN?
.....
.....?
EVEN IF I CANNOT DO ANYTHING WHILE I AM HERE...
EVEN THOUGH THERE'S NOTHING FOR ME TO DO...
I JUST CANNOT SAY, "I WILL LEAVE FOREVER."

HAVING YOU BY MY SIDE...
...IS ALL I COULD WANT.
DIDN'T I TELL YOU LAST TIME?
A-ANYWAY... YOU KNOW...
WELL, MAYBE THAT'S NOT ALL I COULD WANT.
...SHAO...
...I WANT YOU TO STAY HERE.
NOT BECAUSE YOU'RE PROTECTING ME, BUT...

BECAUSE... BECAUSE...
...BECAUSE...
I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SAY IT...
UHHH....
IS THAT A GOOD ENOUGH REASON FOR YOU TO STAY?
I WANT YOU TO STAY HERE FOREVER, SHAO

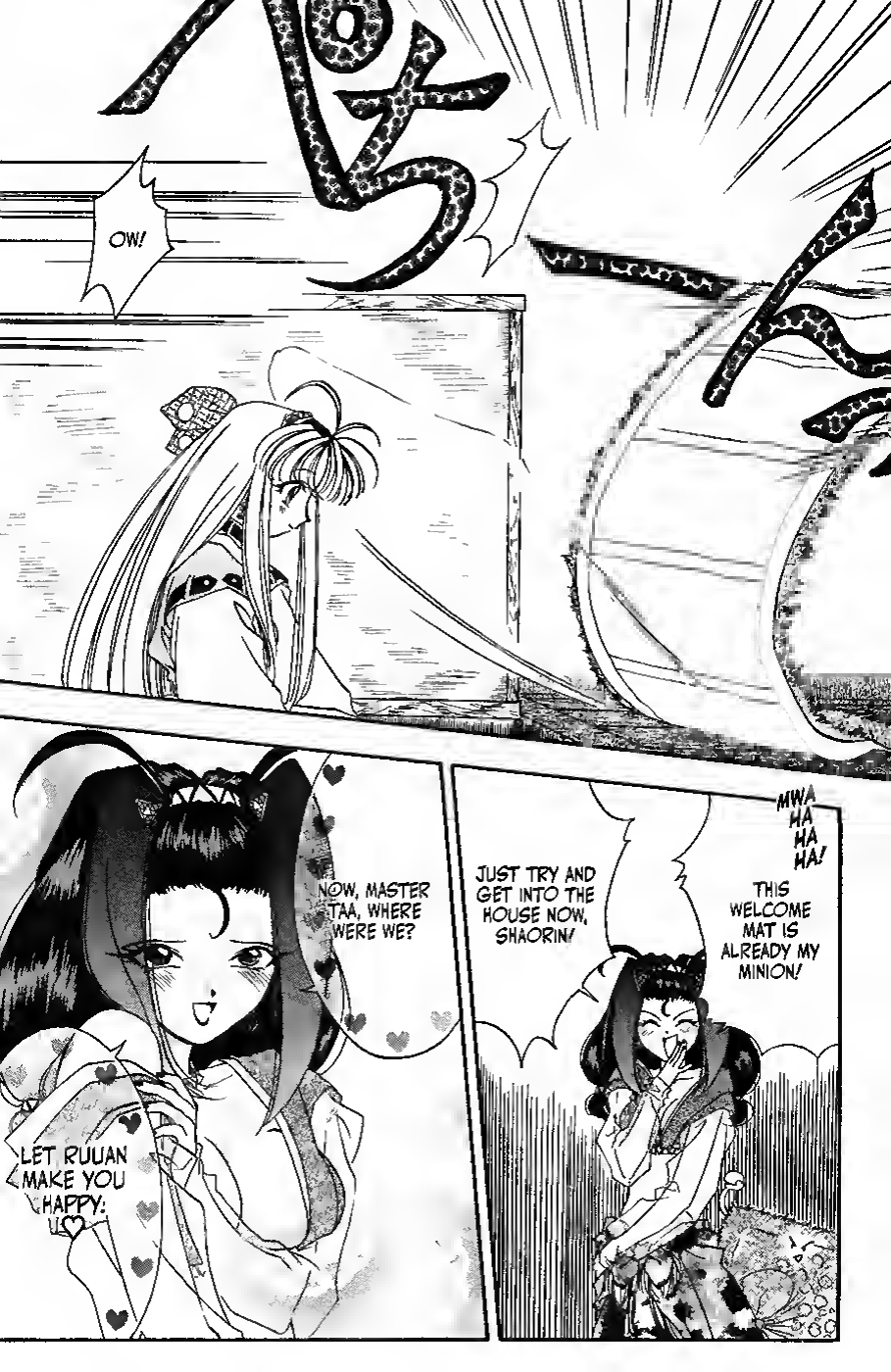

YES.
...UMM.
I...

ぎゅっ

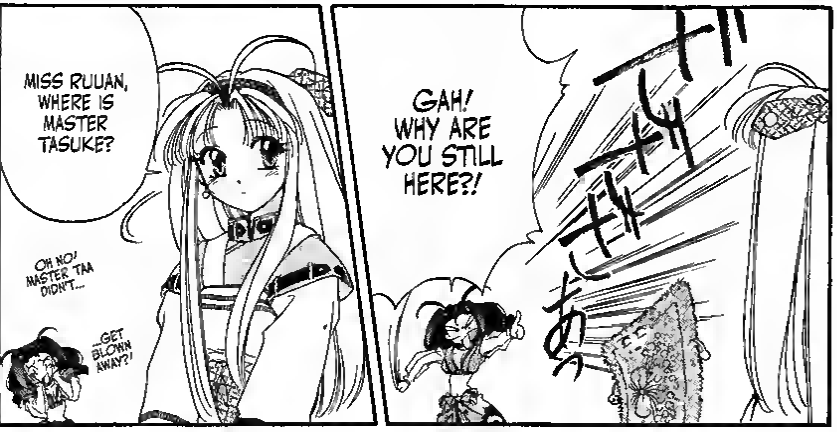
...MIGHT HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU...
...TO COME FOR ME, MASTER TASUKE.
IN
SQUEE
BTHMP

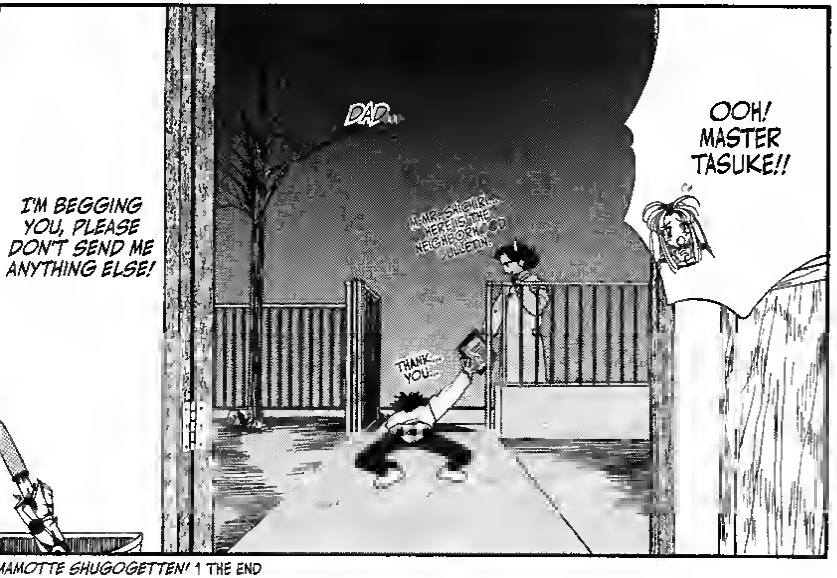
HA HA HA HA. YOU'LL REGRET NOT RETURNING TO YOUR SHITENRIN...
SHAORIN!
IT'S COLD OUT HERE. LET'S GO INSIDE!
DOES THAT MEAN MASTER TAA LIKES SHAORIN MORE THAN ME?!
CURSES!
...MY SECOND DETAILED AND PERFECT STRATEGY.
HA HA HA!
I WILL HAVE TO EMPLOY...

READY?!
HE STEPPED ON IT!
OH LOOK, SOMEONE LITTERED.
NOW, HURRY UP AND STEP ON THIS WELCOME MAT, SHAORIN.
FIELD OF VISION
TAKE A CLOSER LOOK!
YO TEN SHIN SHO LAI!
むくむく
.....?


OW!
MWA HA HA HA!
THIS WELCOME MAT IS ALREADY MY MINION!
JUST TRY AND GET INTO THE HOUSE NOW, SHAORIN!
NOW, MASTER TAA, WHERE WERE WE?
LET RUUAN MAKE YOU HAPPY.

I...
...DECIDED TO STAY WITH MASTER TASUKE AFTER ALL.
OH... MISS RUIAN.
WE CAN WORK TOGETHER...
...SO THAT MASTER TASUKE WILL BE THE HAPPIEST PERSON IN THE WORLD!


MISS RUUAN, WHERE IS MASTER TASUKE?
OH NO! MASTER TAA DIDN'T...
...GET BLOWN AWAY?!
GAH! WHY ARE YOU STILL HERE?!


I'M BEGGING YOU, PLEASE DON'T SEND ME ANYTHING ELSE!
DAD...
...MR. SAGIRI... HERE IS THE NEIGHBORHOOD BULLETIN.
THANK... YOU...
OOH! MASTER TASUKE!!